GODIN (Gaudin) Family

The First Colonist

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Charles Godin (Gaudin) (1st)

- Born in **1631** in Aubermesnil-Beaumais, Dieppe, France
  - Parents Jacques Gaudin and Marguerite Nieul
- Immigrated between **1653** and **1654** from Aubermesnil, Normandie to Quebec City area
- Married on 6 Nov **1656** in Quebec City (Notre-Dame-de-Quebec) to **Marie Boucher** (she was 12 years old)
  - Born 11 April **1644** in Beaupré, Montmorency
  - Daughter of **Marin Boucher** and **Perinne Malet**
  - Buried 15 July **1730** (L'Ange Gardien)
- Lived in Beaupré (L'Ange Gardien), near Quebec City. Had 17 children.
- Died between **1706** and **1712**, L'Ange-Gardien, Quebec

Children :
1. **François** b 1659 – d Oct 17, 1684
2. **Marie** b Apr 29 1662 – m Sept 7 1682 to Louis Goulet, m Oct 8 1687 to Pierre Denis
3. **Geneviève** b Oct 11 1663 – m Oct 17 1689 to Francois Gariéry – d Jul 5 1737
4. **Marguerite** b Mar 9 1665 – m April 28 1687 to Guillaume Tardif – d 1744
5. **Ursule** b June 12 1667 – m Jan 24 to Denis Quentin - d1723
6. **Charles** b Nov 18 1668 – m Oct 17 1689 to Marie-Marguerite Perron, m Aug 28 1736 to Ursule Laisdon - d May 12 1743
7. **Anne** b Dec 26 1670 – m Nov 10 1698 to Jean Perron - d1705
8. **Catherine** b Apr 24 1672 – m Feb 22 1694 to Pierre Dumesnil - d1724
9. **Madeleine** b Oct 11 1673 – m Nov 10 1698 to Jacques Desnoux - d1720)
10. **Pierre** b July 9 1675 – m Apr 24 1704 to Anne Mathieu, m Catherine Pellerin – d Jul 29 1733
11. **Angélique** b Jun 24 1677 – m 1695 to Jacques Amelot – d Feb 14 1718
12. **Jean-François** b Feb 5 1679 – d 1680
13. **Alexis** April 8 1680 – m Dec 1 1682 to Madeleine Jacob, - d 31 Mar 1764
14. **(Jean-) François** b 1680 or 1681 – m Jun 8 1705 to Genevieve Lefrançois, m Apr 25 1746 to Marie-Anne Augé, m May 3 1751 to Luise Glinel – d Nov 10 1769
15. **Louise** Feb 3 1682 – m Jul 27 1705 to Charles Vesinat
16. **Charlotte** b Sep 20 1683 – m Nov 3 1717 to Vincent Guillot
17. **Françoise** b Apr 11 1685 – m Nov 17 1704 to Martin Pagé
18. **Antoine** b Sep 3 1688 – m Jan 18 1712 to Catherine Jacob - d1731

Charles was the first of the Godin family line in Canada. In contrast to Jacques and Marguerite, the parents of Charles, much has been written about Charles and Marie Godin (née Boucher). There is an entire chapter devoted to this family in the book Our French Canadian Ancestors by Thomas Laforest (Volume 24, Ch 13). The entire text is reprinted below:

> **Charles Godin by Thomas Laforest**
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> Charles Godin or Gaudin, son of Jacques and of Marguerite Nieule, was a native of the small community of Aubermesnil-Beaumais, canton of Offranville, arrondissement of Dieppe, Department of la Seine-Maritime, in Normandy. The parish of Aubermesnil de Beaumais, dedicated to Saint-Laurent, today is part of Tourville-sur-Arques, in the archdiocese of Rouen.

This is almost all that I can verify on the subject of the French origins of this ancestor. According to our Canadian census, Charles would have been born between 1629 and 1636. Only a lucky researcher, with a copy of the baptismal record of Charles Godin in his hand, will be able to eliminate these doubts.

Beaupré Coast

Guillemette Hébert, daughter of Louis and the very active wife of Guillaume Couillard, had obtained from Jean de Lauzon, on 20 February 1654, six arpents of land on the Beaupré Coast, in the present territory of L'Ange Gardien. On 30 July 1656, the land owner returned this land to Lauzon "provided that the latter give three of them to Gaudin".

Did this Charles Gaudin receive a pure and simple gift, a reward? It is easy to conclude that the new colonist received a tangible appreciation for the good services which he had rendered to the Couillard family, which was large and very active at Québec at that time.

Godin, who arrived in the country probably in 1653 or 1654, was ready to set up his home and to work on the farm which he may have developed during the period of his indenture when he had been a servant. On the first of October 1656, the notary Guillaume Audouart was summoned to sign Charle's marriage contract. His darling was Marie Boucher, daughter of Marin Boucher and of Perinne Malet, residents of the Coast. Marie had been baptized on the Beaupré Coast, it seems, probably at residence of François Bélanger. It was Madame Bélander, Marie Guyon, who bequeathed her first name to her on 11 April 1644, accompanied by godfather Macé Gravel. The missionary forgot to sign his name. The act still exists in the registry of Notre-Dame de Quebec.

When Marie accepted Charles Godin as her husband, she was a mature twelve years old. The Jesuit André Richard, great missionary of Cap-Breton, Nipisiquit and Miscou, blessed the union of Charles and Marie, probably in the Boucher paternal house, where François Bélanger and Claude Auber, future notary of the region, had gathered as witnesses.

Thus, very humbly began the endless story of the founding Boucher-Godin family. Love begins when we accept our own small place in the grand order of things.

Hard Life

The establishment of the seigneury of Beauport goes back to 1634. Jean Bourdon's map of 1641 acquaints us with the seigneury of Beaupré, a vast forest bordering the river. But already in the territory of the future Château-Richer, the presence of the Gagnons was noted. In 1656, a goodly number of inhabitants were owners of lots between the Montmerency Rive and Cap Tourmente. On 6 August 1653, the *Journal des Jesuits* reported that François Bélanger was chosen to fill the important post of mayor for the inhabitants of the region of Québec as representative of Longue Pointe, future parish of Château-Richer.

Charles Godin and Marie Boucher, encouraged by the neighborhood, set to work immediately. They needed wheat to make good bread and at least one cow for milk and butter. The river offered fresh fish and the forest had abundant wild game. The economic, social and religious life carried them with confidence to a free and prosperous future life.

On 2 February 1660, there was an extraordinary meeting of the residents of the Coast at the church of Château-Richer. Msgr de Laval had come in person to the heart of his flock to administer the sacrament of confirmation to 173 faithful people.

In order to make this first pastoral visit in the country in Canada, the holy bishop started on the Beaupré Coast. He left Québec on 23 January, accompanied by Henri de Bernières, a young clergyman, and his valet Nicolas Durand, originally from Montreuil-sous-Bois, near Paris. The

Jesuit Father François Lemercier had preceded the bishop to prepare for him coming. From Québec to Beauport, from Beauport to Château-Richer, the journey was undertaken on foot or on snowshoes. However, history does not specify this detail. On Monday, 2 February, Chandeleur Day or the Purification of the Holy Virgin, everything was ready for the extraordinary ceremony, despite its simplicity, for all these people wishing to finally meet their bishop in flesh and bone.

Among the people who came to the Coast and even from the Ile d'Orleans, there was Charles Gaudin in the 54th Line, between Alexis Gravel and Jean-François Bélanger. His wife, Marie Boucher, also took her place in the group.

On 28 May 1661, Charles ceded through a lease a half-arpent in width from his three arpents, to Guillaume Marescot dit Desjardins, his neighbor, a Norman like him. The latter returned to his country the following autumn.

We must wait until the censuses of 1666 and 1667 to obtain new information on the Godins. The 35 year old Charles, and his 22 year old wife, had five children in their home. The following year, the census takers noted they had five head of cattle and seven arpents of land under cultivation. Their neighbor Robert Jeanne had six arpents cultivated; Nicolas Roussin declared twenty arpents and eleven animals.

This was not the wealth of kings but the active deficit of humble beginnings.

Church Warden

After a visit to L'Ange-Gardien on 28 May, 1671, Msgr de Laval issued and ordinance requesting the sale of the land belonging to the said church. This homestead had been bought in 1664, in the name of the church, from Pasquier Nony dit Larose. Well, the church officials had not been able to honor all their obligations. Also, the zealous bishop noted the extreme necessity of beginning to build a church as soon as possible.
"*there being only a small very poor building where the rain and snow can spoil the painting and everything that is on the altar."*

However, they must keep an arpent of frontal land from the shore as far as the bottom of the first slope, for the benefit of the church, so that they can take needed firewood from it for the use of the priest in charge and who will also be able to fish on the front of the retained arpent.

The church committee, Jacques Vériza, Jean Trudel and Charles Godin scrupulously obeyed the orders of their bishop. On 3 April 1672, they sold the church land to Réne Letartre for 650 livres and "*keeping the animals and tools"* and also an arpent of land detached from this land. The church committee then acquired a new piece of land, the land of the present church.

The matter of the payment for the land of Pasquier Nony, or 247 livres, was raised on 31 July 1673. However, at the Sovereign Council there arose a most complicated debate. A merchant from LaRochelle, one Moïse Petit, defender of the rights of the late Anicet Gomin, through the intervention of the administrator and notary Pierre Duquet, stood up for Louis Rouer, Sieur de Villeray, executor of the will. Gilles Rageot asked that the order be carried out against Pasquier Nony and the church wardens of L'Ange-Gardien Jacques Goulet, who had to pay the 247 livres.

On the following 27 November, Charles Godin, in his turn, presented a request to Frontenac insisting that Sieur de Villeray pay the account…The verdict as follows:
"All things considered, the Council dismissed and dismisses the said Godin in the said name from the fines of his said request having no other interest in the affair surely than that of paying."

Finally, in 1674, Father François Fillon agreed with the church wardens that it was necessary to build a church as soon as possible. The new church, begun on 7 June 1675, was ready for the

celebration of mass on the feast day of Saint Barthélemy on 24 August 1676. This was a great day for the whole population of L'Ange-Gardien, particularly for the Godins.

A Few Details

In the census of 1681, the immediate neighbors of the Godin family were Nicolas Roussin to the east and Jacques Savaria to the west. The third neighbor was Robert Laberge. The Godins owned a gun, six head of cattle and had twenty arpents of land under cultivation. They lived about ten arpents to the east of their church.

Documents that have been saved from the seigneurial court or the bailiwick of Beaupré acquaint us with a few additional details concerning Ancestor Godin. On 13 March 1684, Thomas Frérot, merchant, notary and trustee od the estate of Bertrand Chenay, Sieur de LaGarenne, required Charles Godin to pay an old debt of 22 livres 7 sols, contracted for the delivery of planks for the church of L'Ange-Gardien.

In spite of his large family, Charles Godin needed additional cheap labor. Joseph Savaria, baptized on 7 October 1683, worked for the Godins for at least one year. His father, Jacques, a lime merchant, on 11 August 1692 asked that his son be clothed by his employer at least as he had been when he entered his service. Charles Godin was ordered to give the young "*Savaria the cloak which he desired at his home two shirts and a camesole of linen and expenses".*

At the time of a dispute between Guillaume Hébert dir Lecomte, and Louis Gariépy, on 8 November 1700, it was said of Charles Godin, "senior", that he owned a horse.

The Godin Family

In the second generation, the Godin family had a birth rate extraordinary: seventeen between 1659 and 1698. Seventeen adults, sixteen married children and a least 114 members in the third generation.

All the members of the family of Charles Godin and Marie Boucher were born in the territory of L'Ange-Gardien. The first six were baptized at Château-Richer. The five sons and the eleven daughters married in their native parish. The eldest, François, a bachelor, was buried at L'Ange-Gardien on 17 October 1684.

1-Marie was a first allied to the Goulet family by marrying Louis, on 7 September 1682: she had a child with him born post-humously; then, she was allied to the founding family of Denis dit Lapierre, by marrying Pierre.

2-François Gariépy won the heart of Geneviève Godin;

3-Guillaume Tardif that of Marguerite Godin;

4-Denis Quentin that of Ursule Godin.

5-Charles, junior, and Madeleine Perrin built a family of eleven members, the last six of whom were raised in the Ecureuils, seigneury of Belair. On 6 June 1701, Charles bought from Laurent Ginard a piece of land with three arpents of frontage for 1,000 livres.

6-Jean Perron married his sister-in-law Anne Godin.

7- Pierre Dusmesnil dit Lamusique, soldier, worker, cabinetmaker and musician, went to find his wife at the Godin home in the person of Catherine. The husband with many talents, his wife and their ten children spent their days in the capital of the country.

8-Madeleine Godin gave her love to the fine soldier René Desnoux, on 10 October 1698; then, this mother of five children was remarried, to Pierre Chauvet dit Laguerne.

9- Pierre Godin, married to Anne Mathieu on 11 April 1704, had no descendants.

10-But his sister Angélique, wife of Jacques Amelot dit Sanspeur, presented her generation with a progeny of ten members.

11-Jean-François Godin was the only Godin to be married three times: to Geneviève Lefrançois, to Marie-Anne Augé and to Louise Glinel. In 1721 at Neuville, he was second in command of the militia (Second Capitaine de Milice). He was buried there on 10 November 1769, at the age of 92.

12-Alexis Godin, husband of Madeleine Jacob, also lived at Pointe-aux-Trembles. He was buried in the Ecureuils on 31 March 1764.

13-It was the same for the youngest, Antoine, life companion of Catherine Jacob, father of eight children.

14-15-16- Charles Vézina, Vincent Guillot and Martin Page gave their hearts to the sisters Louise, Charlotte and Françoise Godin.

If all the founding families had been as fertile, we would be a large number of people today.

End of an Era

With the arrival of the new century, the Godins thought about acquiring a well-deserved peace. On 29 March 1702, they sold their land to their sons Pierre and Jean-François, for 2,000 livres, payable after their deaths to their inheriting brothers and sisters. The Godin homestead included "*a new house of half-timbers made up of two rooms, barn and stable".* Pierre and Jean-François committed themselves at that time to keep their father and mother with them for "*the rest of their days".*

At the end of the same year, on 6 November, Jean-François and Alexis Godin, as well as Joseph Roussin, promised to deliver 79 ship masts cut at Baie Saint-Paul, to Claude de Ramzay, commander of the naval troops. They were to be delivered to the shore at Québec. Promised payment: 500 livres.

Then the children began to buy and sell their share of the inheritance. Madeleine sold hers to Alexis on 14 November 1704, for 50 livres. On 27 March 1706, Jean-François in his turn, bought Alexis's shares for 230 livres. On 17 July 1706, Angélique ceded to her sister Ursule, all her rights to the estate, for 70 livres cash in playing card money. Lets summarize: on 28 June 1732, Jean Godin, living at the Ecureuils, sold to Jean Huot, junior, for 2,200 livres, the northeast half, twelve and a half perches of the frontal ancestral land, bordering Jean Huot, senior, and Pierre Godin, "*on which there is a barn built, enclosed with planks and covered with straw".* In that way, half the paternal property left the Godin family.

There exists a rather frustrating fact for the descendants. Ancestor Charles Godin, present on the first of December 1706, at the wedding of Alexis, was no longer alive on 18 January 1712, at the wedding of Antoine. How to explain this big gap in the parish records? Another still larger frustration: the day of the death of Marie Boucher, sometime after 1712, remains undiscovered.

According to Saint Paul, he who performs work does so in the hope of receiving his reward. Charles and Marie, you sowed life for more than a half-century and you harvested one hundred times more. Your grandeur is measured today by the multitude of your descendants who live and make today's history. It is better to be an ancestor of the living than of the dead! But, without those who have preceded us, we would not even be shadows in motion.

Family Name Variations

Beausejour, Bellefontaine, Boisjoli, Catalogne, Chatillon, Felix, Gadan, Gadean, Gaudin, Gedeon, Godan, Godera, Godui, Gooden, Goodwin, Gordon, Lahuelliére, Lapoterie, Lauliére, Lincour, Priscot, Priscotte, Tourangeau and Valcourt.

End Notes

1-Record of Audouart, 1 October 1656.
2-Record of Auber, 28 May 1661.
3-Record of Chambalon, 6 November 1702.
4-Records of Jacob. 6 June 1701; 29 March 1702; 6 November 1702; 27 March 1706.
5-Réne Casgrain, Histoire de la paroisse L'Ange-Gardien (1902), pp.31, 46-49, 53-55.
6-Raymond Gariépy, LSB et IO (1974), p.119; LTA-G (1984), pp.384-393.
7-René Jetté, DGFO (1983), pp. 5114-512.
8-Lionel Laberge, HFL (1963), pp. 13, 106, 277.
9-André Lafontaine, LBB et IO (1987), pp.29 ,109, 124, 151, 175-176; RANF 1666 & 1667 (1985), pp.26, 237; RANF 1681 (1987). P.213.
10-Pierre-Georges Roy, Les petites Choses de Nother Histoire (1928), Vol.5, p.88.
11-Marcel Trudel, CI 1632-1662 (1983), p. 337; LTSL en 1663 (1973), pp. 47, 48, 538.
12-___.BRH, Vol. 47, p.142.
13-___.JDCSNF, Vol.1, pp. 757-760, 779.
14-___.MSGCF, Vol.3, p.205.

Marin Boucher

Thomas Laforest also has a chapter devoted to Marin Boucher, father of Marie Boucher, in his series of books entitled Our French Canadian Ancestors. The chapter is reprinted here:

Marin Boucher by Thomas Laforest

Seven and a half centuries ago, the royal troops of France, with Blanche de Castille at their head, regent of the country until her son Louis IX attained his majority, captured the imposing fortress of the castle of Belleme and took possession of the county of Perche. The Duc d'Alencon, brother of Philippe VI, had obtained this territory earlier but, in 1525, the region was returned once and for all to the French crown.

A century passed. Then around 1633, there was great activity. Robert Giffard and Noel Juchereau were recruiting for New France. They searched the wooded hills around their small village and tried to convince the men and their relatives to follow them to Canada. Giffard must have been very persuasive since he succeeded in enlisting the following: the family of Jean Guyon, mason; the family of Zacharie Cloutier, carpenter; Henry Pinquet, Marin and Gaspard Boucher and many others who had verbal contracts of indenture and even some who made private agreements. The contracts of Guyon and Cloutier, full of precise details, were signed before Notary Roussel, on March 14, 1634. The two of them were committed for five years to Giffard "up to the point of leaving in order to make, by the grace of God, the aforementioned colony the country of New France."

Le Perche

What is this country from where came, the greatest number of first families to be established in Canada in 1634? A brochure, published in 1974 entitled Le Perche des Canadiens, gives us precise information on the subject. The name Perche disappeared from the administrative divisions of France two centuries ago but it stills exists as a geographical region to the west of the Paris basin between Normandy to the north, Maine to the west, the Vendomois to the south and the Beauce to the east.

This province is vividly contrasted from the neighboring regions by its terrain. Erosion carved the countryside into numerous valleys and its large forest is one of the water sources for western France. Numerous rivers and tributaries drain into the Seine and the Loire. The coast of lower Normandy is fed by sources deep in its wooded crests.

The introduction of Christianity into the Perche seems to date from the 5th century. After the difficult period of Norman invasions, the Perche was organized and developed with the help of its seigneurs. Monasteries were founded everywhere but then the Hundred Years War weighed heavily on the countryside. Castles and villages were destroyed and but a few Roman churches remained. After the conflict, the villagers left the forest and built a new town on the other side of the ruins which they designated the old bourg. Around the middle of the 15th century, the people of Perche started to farm again. With the advent of an iron and weaving industry, the villagers resumed a way of life long since forgotten. The country scarcely changed in the 17th century except that agriculture and the crafts of artisans could not employ the expanding population. Increased knowledge of the New World, a taste for independence and perhaps for some of them, the idea of converting the native people hastened their departure.

Towards New France

Before enlisting his people, Robert Giffard, son of Guillaume, Sieur de la Tour and trumpeter at Autheuil, knew what waited for him in Canada. He had gone there for the first time in 1621 and lived there for 5 or 6 years. After his return to France, he took all the time he needed to fulfill his plan of implanting a certain number of families from Perche on Canadian soil. At the beginning of spring in 1634, Giffard and his future colonists were at the port of Dieppe. Four ships commanded by Duplessis-Boschard and assisted by the Captains de Nesle, Bontemps and de Lormel awaited them before setting sail for New France. Among the passengers were Marin Boucher and his family, burning with impatience at the idea that in several weeks they would become acquainted with their new country. Benjamin Sulte tells us that Marin, originally from Langy, had just sold a house to Jean Guyon. This house that Marin had owned was in Montagne next to that of Pierre Forget.

At the beginning of June the first contingent from Perche arrived in Quebec and lost no time in choosing a site along the luxuriant banks of the majestic Saint Lawrence River. Boucher immediately opted for a lot on the Saint Charles River on land belonging to the Recollets.

Father Archange Godbout did patient research, urged on of course by Madame Pierre Montagne, to find the origin of these families from Perche from whom the majority of French Canadians are descended. In *Our Ancestors of the 17th Century*, a colossal work which unfortunately remains unfinished, Father Godbout gives details on three generations of Bouchers.

In his report published in 1975, the Archivist of Quebec, 15 years after the death of Father Godbout, gives us another portion of the work by this esteemed genealogist written under the title of Old Families of France in New France, with an introduction and additional notes by Roland J. Auger, then director of Genealogical Service at the National Archives of Quebec. Pages 139 and 140 are devoted in large part to Marin Boucher.

We read that, Marin was a relative of Gaspard but not his brother as was often claimed. He had at least 2 sisters:

Jeanne, who married, on July 15, 1629, at Saint-Jean, France to Thomas Hayot; and Antoinette, wife of Guillaume Lecourt.

Two Marriages in France

Marin Boucher was born between 1587 and 1589. He was married twice before leaving for Canada. On February 7, 1611, he married Julienne Baril, daughter of Jean and Raoulline, living at LaBarre, in the parish of Saint-Langis-les-Mortagne (Orne). They had seven children as follows:

1) Nicole was born, on November 8, 1611, at Saint-Langis. She died in France.
2) Jean was born, on March 15, 1613, at Saint-Langis. She died, September 21, 1617, at Saint-Jean de Mortagne, France.
3) Louise was born, on August 15, 1615, at Saint-Jean de Mortagne. She died in France
4) Francois was born, on November 22, 1617, at Saint-Langis. He married Florence Gareman, daughter of Pierre and Madeleine Charlot, on September 3, 1641, at Quebec. They had eleven children, six boys and five girls.
5) Etiennette was born on May 11, 1620, at Saint-Langis. She died in France.
6) Charlotte was born, on January 15, 1622, at Saint-Langis. She died in France.
7) Marie was born, on June 8, 1625, at Saint-Langis. She died in France.

Julienne Baril died, on December 15, 1627 and was buried, at Saint-Langis the next day.

Around 1628 or 1629, Marin took a second wife. She was Perrine Mallet. The marriage was in Saint-Langis-les-Mortagne, France. They had seven children as follows:

1) Louis-Marin was baptized, on August 29, 1630, at Saint-Langis. He died, December 18, 1700, at the Hotel-Dieu de Quebec.
2) Jean-Galleran was baptized, on February 16, 1633, at Saint-Langis. He married Marie Leclerc, daughter of Jonas and Marie Parmentier, on October 10, 1661, at Chateau-Richer. They had eight children, five girls and three boys.
3) Francoise was baptized, on June 22, 1636, at Quebec. She married Jean Plante, son of Nicolas and Isabelle Chauvin, on September 1, 1650, at Quebec. They had thirteen children, eight boys, four girls and one died, gender unknown.
4) Pierre was baptized, on February 13, 1639, at Quebec. He married Marie-Anne Saint-Denis, daughter of Pierre and Vivienne Bunel, on April 4, 1663, at Chateau-Richer. They had twelve children, six boys and six girls.
5) Madeleine was baptized, on August 4, 1641, at Quebec. She married Louis Houde, son of Noel and Anne Lefebvre, on January 12, 1655, at Quebec. They had fourteen children, nine boys and five girls.
6) Marie was baptized, on April 11, 1644, at Quebec. She married Charles Godin, son of Jacques and Marguerite Nieule, on November 6, 1656, at Quebec. They had seventeen children, eleven girls and six boys.
7) Guillaume was baptized, on May 5, 1647, at Quebec. He married Marguerite-Jeanne Thibault, daughter of Marin and Marie-Madeleine Lefrancois, on November 21, 1672, at Chateau-Richer. They had one child, Marguerite.

Perrine Mallet, the second wife of Marin Boucher, was born between 1604 and 1606 and was the daughter of Pierre and Jacqueline Liger, from Courgeout (Orne). When the Bouchers came to New France in 1634, they were accompanied by 3 children; Louis-Marin, 4 years old; Jean-Galleran, 1 year old; Francois, 16 years old.

Heir to Champlain

We know almost nothing about the first four years of Marin Boucher and his family in New France except that, the pioneer is mentioned in Champlain's will. According to the historian E. Mitchell (a member of the Society of Canadian Writers and the Historical Societies of Montreal and Boucherville), the founder of Quebec certainly knew Boucher before his death. She states that "the Commandant of Trois-Rivieres, Marc-Antoine Bras-de-fer de Chateaufort, assumed his duties as interim governor immediately after the funeral. He presided at the reading of Champlain's will; a will whose validity was to be contested, in which a man called Marin was mentioned and it concerns, we believe, Marin, relative of Gaspard:" "I give to Marin, mason, living near the house of the Recollet Fathers, the last suit that I had made from material which I got at the store" wrote Champlain.

Marin Boucher must have greatly appreciated this legacy from Champlain because, we know how much our Ancestors, who were for the most part very poor, attached importance to any clothing, be it also threadbare and worn out.

Farmer of the Jesuits

On August 24, 1638, Marin was called to give testimony on the circumstances of the voyage of Gaspard Boucher "his relative", who also arrived in 1634. We know that, Marin first worked a piece of land that the Recollets had abandoned in 1629, following the surrender of Quebec to the Kirke brothers. Later, he took a farm, with his brother-in-law, Thomas Hayot (the ancestor of the Ayotte families), on land of the Jesuits at Beauport. On June 11, 1648, reports the Jesuit Journal, the two farmers separated. Hayot kept the farm and Boucher took a concession next to that of Olivier Tardif.

On the Beaupré Coast

Later, Boucher and his family lived on the Beaupré coast. Marin then sold his former farm of 3 arpents in frontage on the Saint Charles River "from the stream which separates the cleared field of the Reverend Fathers Recollets from the deserted property formerly of Jacques Caumont." Marin claimed to have received the land from the Company of New France but the Recollets claimed this land as belonging to them when they returned to Canada in 1670.

On March 6, 1656, Boucher signed a note for 176 livres for the Fabrique de Quebec, an old debt contracted from the Compagnie des Habitants. Meanwhile, our mason-farmer wrote Father Godbout, advanced in age. Little by little, he gave up his concessions. He gave one and a half arpents in frontage to his son-in-law, Louis Houde, which was returned to Marin, on the 13th of September 1655. He then gave two arpents to another son-in-law, Jean Plante, on April 15, 1656, which was receipted for on February 7, 1659. He increased this, on July 8, by 8 perches; and the right of passage, on September 27, 1668. He gave another two arpents to his son, Jean-Galleran, on April 30, 1656 and added an increase of seven and one-half perches, on December 15, 1662. He made a similar gift to his son, Guillaume, on July 29, 1670. At the time of the 1667 census, Marin Boucher had reached the age of 80. In the census, he listed 8 head of cattle and 20 arpents under cultivation. He died March 25, 1671, at Chateau-Richer.

In 1681, Perrine Mallet, his widow, was listed in the census along with Antoine Voilon, a tailor, who seems to have been in her employ. She died, on August 24, 1687 and buried the next day at Quebec.

His epitaph exists fine and clear, copied from the registry of Chateau-Richer, dated March 29, 1671, as follows:

> "In the year of Our Lord Jesus Christ 1671, on the 29th of March died Marin Boucher after having lived as a good Christian and received the Holy sacraments of Eucharist,

penance and the last rights of extreme unction, was buried in the cemetery of Chateau-Richer by Monsieur Morel accompanied by the Reverend Father Nouvelle and by me doing priestly functions for them on the coast of Beaupré."
(Signed) F. Fillion, missionary priest

The Bouchers are Legion

The descendants of Marin Boucher are extremely numerous in America. "His descendants would today form a complete regiment," exclaimed the historian Benjamin Sulte 100 years ago, in speaking of Marin Boucher.

In our day, the expression is not strong enough. It would be necessary to speak of an entire army.

Family Name Variations

According to Tanguay, the surname Boucher has given rise to no less than nineteen variations: Belleville, Cambray, De Boucherville, De Grosbois, De la Brutiere, De la Periere, De Montanville, De Montbrun, De Montizambert, De Niveville, Desnois, Desroches, Desrosiers, De Vercheres, Dubois, Simon, St. Amour, St. Martin, and St. Pierre.

Marin Boucher's name comes up infrequently in the early history of New France but he was an upright, hard-working and talented individual that was respected by all who spoke of him. For Champlain to will him his best suit is a sign of the respect he had earned within the colony. He was one of the founding fathers of the town of Beauport and is buried in the cemetery of Château Richer. There is an association of the Boucher family in Quebec that represents the approximately 20,000 people that can trace their lineage to Marin. This association has located the exact house where Marin grew up in France.

Ancestral home of Marin Boucher in Saint-Langis-de-Mortagne in Perche, France.
Image source: Michel Robert

Aubermesnil-Beaumais

Father Cyprien Tanguay authored a genealogical dictionary first printed in 1871. It is considered the main genealogical reference text for French Canadian families in the Quebec region of Canada. The Dictionnaire Genealogique des Familles Canadiennes is comprised of two primary volumes. The dictionary includes baptism dates (b), marriage dates (m) and burial dates (s). The Mgr Laval issued an ordinance in March 1664 that demanded the parents of newborns have their children baptized as soon as possible after birth; although the birth dates were not recorded in the dictionary the baptisms were conducted shortly after birth, especially after the establishment of a priest in 1661 and a permanent parish priest in 1667 in the community of L'Ange Gardien, the area where our first ancestor Charles was granted land.

1656, (6 novembre) Québec. [3]

I.— GAUDIN, CHARLES, b 1631, fils de Jacques et de Marguerite Niard, de St. Laurent de Beaumès.

BOUCHER, Marie, [MARIN I.

François, b [3] 1659; s 17 oct. 1684, à L'Ange-Gardien. [4] — *Marie*, b 29 avril 1662, au Château-Richer [5]; 1° m [4] 7 sept. 1682, à Louis GOULET; 2° m [4] 8 oct. 1687, à Pierre DENIS. — *Geneviève*, b [5] 11 oct. 1663; m [4] 17 oct. 1689, à François GARIÉPY. — *Marguerite*, b [5] 9 mars 1665; m [4] 28 avril 1687, à Guillaume TARDIF. — *Ursule*, b [5] 12 juin 1667; m [4] 24 janv. 1689, à Denis QUENTIN. — *Charles*, b [5] 18 nov. 1668; m [4] 17 oct. 1689, à Marie-Madeleine PERRON. — *François*, b 1680; m [5] 8 juin 1705, à Geneviève LEFRANÇOIS. — *Anne*, b [4] 26 déc. 1670; m [4] 10 nov. 1698, à Jean PERRON. — *Catherine*, b [4] 24 avril 1672; m [4] 22 fév. 1694, à Pierre DUMESNIL. — *Madeleine*, b [4] 11 oct. 1673; m [4] 10 nov. 1698, à Jacques DESNOUX. — *Pierre*, b [4] 9 juillet 1675; m [4] 21 avril 1704, à Anne MATHIEU. — *Angélique*, b [4] 24 juin 1677; m 1695, à Jacques AMELOT; s [3] 14 fév. 1718. — *Jean-François*, b [4] 5 fév. 1679; s [4] 1680. — *Alexis*, (2) b [4] 8 avril 1680; m [4] 1er déc. 1706, à Madeleine JACOB. — *Louise*, b [4] 3 fév. 1682; m [4] 27 juillet 1705, à Charles VESINAT. — *Charlotte*, b [4] 20 sept. 1683; m [4] 3 nov. 1717, à Vincent GUILLOT. — *Françoise*, b [4] 11 avril 1685; m [4] 17 nov. 1704, à Martin PAGÉ. — *Antoine*, b [4] 3 sept. 1688; m [4] 18 janv. 1712, à Catherine JACOB.

Original entry from the Tanguay Dictionary (3957-1, p255)

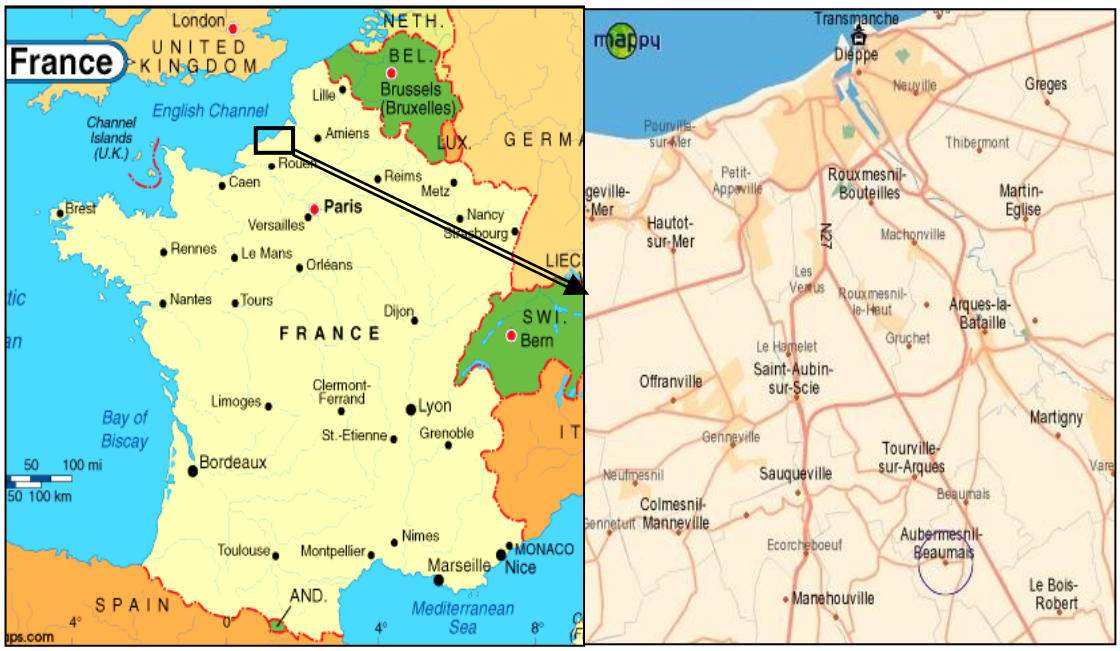
Others have supplemented Tanguay's 4400 pages of text and have made corrections and additions to the original texts. Naturally there are some inconsistencies, errors and omissions in such a monumental work. In our family records, the origins of Charles Godin has an inconsistency between the Tanguay text and other references. The place of origin for Charles is listed as *St-Laurent de Beaumès, France* in the Tanguay text and Aubermesnil de Beaumais in the LaForest text, but this difference can easily be explained.

Aubermesnil-Beaumais originally consisted of two small villages. Aubermesnil and Beaumesnil. They were united in 1824 and in the year 2003, this small town, simply known as Beaumais in some reference texts and regional maps, had a population of 450. In an aerial view they still appear as 2 distinct villages approximately 1.5 km apart. The location of the village is about 10km south of Dieppe, 4 km SE of Offranville, and 50km NE from Rouen. The map on the next page shows its location. Today there are a few Godin and Gaudin names listed in the Dieppe phone book, and none are in Aubermesnil-Beaumais or the surrounding towns.

The reference to *Saint Laurent de Beaumais* by Tanguay is the name of the former parish church located in what was originally known as Beaumais. This church was originally built in the 13th century and rebuilt in the 16th century. It received significant damage in a fire in 1825 and lay in partial ruin and was completely abandoned until its reconstruction and expansion in 1895. The

church at the Aubermesnil site dates to the 12th century and is dedicated to St Paul. It has been restored. The fact that they named the Beaumais parish church can approximate Charles' origins in France to within a couple of kilometers of that church.

The parish name of Aubermesnil is likely from "d'Osberrii Maisnil", first referenced in 1040. The adjacent parish of Beaumais is stated as being from the words "bel meis" meaning "nice house". Historical records state the population in 1806 of Aubermesnil, the larger of the two villages, was 95 persons and covers an area of nearly 5 square kilometers. Today it is listed as having one of the youngest populations for a village in France: in 2006, over 34% of the population is under 20 years of age. The village has two schools (a kindergarten and a primary school), both on Henri IV Road.



Location of Aubermesnil-Beaumais

Located between the Scie and the Arques rivers, the village is located approximately 10 km southeast from the English Channel in upper Normandy. Surrounded by relatively fertile land, several of the inhabitants (including the current mayor) state agriculture as their primary source of income. Overall, Normandy is the region of France which produces the greatest amount of dairy and apple products in France. There are no indications of any other important economic activity for the village except for a cabinetmaker and a window distributor. The town also has a mansion visible on Google Earth.

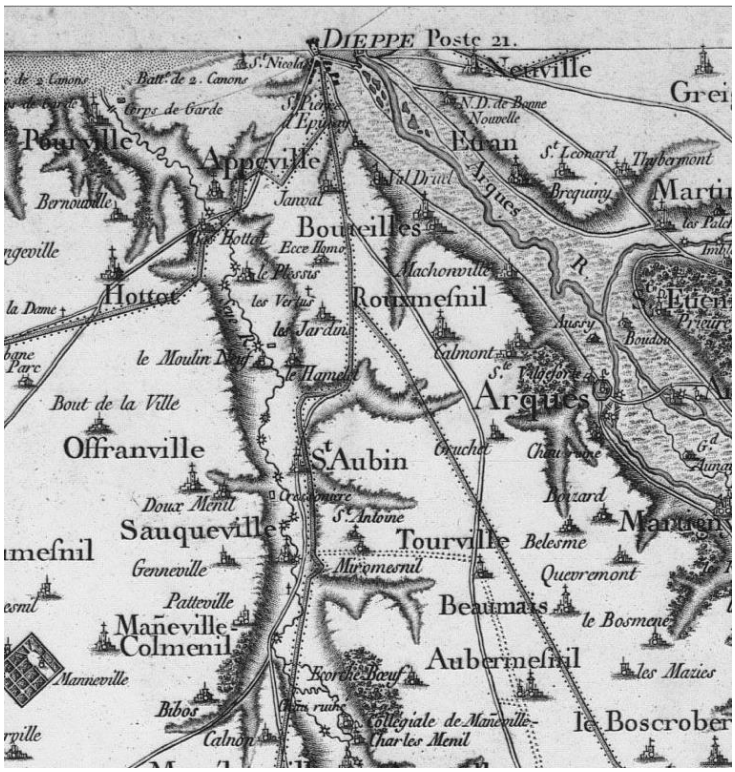
The rural regions of France have many villages that boast small populations; there are over 36,860 villages and towns in France according to a recent national census. There are several villages and towns within a 5km vicinity of Aubermesnil-Beaumais, including Chaussée (300 pop), Anneville-sur-Scie (400 pop), Bois-Robert (300 pop), Manehouville (200 pop), and Martigny (500 pop). The larger towns within the vicinity include Tourville-sur-Arques (1100 pop), Arques-la-Bataille (2500 pop) and Offranville (3500 pop).

It hasn't been possible to track with certainty the family history prior to the departure of Charles Gaudin from France between 1652 and 1654. All that is stated is that Charles was baptized in 1631 in the Aubermesnil-Beaumais region and, in his early 20's, departed for New France from Dieppe. The earliest available records in regards to the people of Aubermesnil and Beaumais is the year 1619, as many of the prior records were either not kept, or were destroyed in the Dieppe

fire of 1694 caused by the bombardment of the city by an Anglo-Dutch fleet during the 9-years war.

There is little written specifically about the history of Aubermesnil-Beaumais however the entire Normandy region is rich with history and there is little doubt that the residents of Aubermesnil-Beaumais shared in this past. The city of Dieppe, an important center that boasts a castle, is very close. The castle at Arques-la-Bataille (in the past simply referred to as Arques), the scene of an important battle in 1589, is 4 kilometers from Aubermesnil-Beaumais. There is a beautiful 17th century Chateau called Miromesnil at Tourville-sur-Arques, less than 2 kilometers away (the term "mesnil" is old French and it can be translated as a house or village).

The famous Cassini family of astronomers were the official cartographers of France in the 1750's and their map of the region is below. This section of the detailed map shows the area of Aubermesnil and Beaumais (south-southeast of Dieppe) before the consolidation of the two villages. Note that in old French the letter s was often written as ſ.



Cassini Map (approx 1750) of the Aubermesnil-Beaumais region. Note the main Paris-Dieppe road goes through Aubermesnil.
Source: http://www.cartocassini.org/

House in Aubermesnil dating to the 17th century.

The Colony of New France

Discovery and Initial Colony

Under a commission from King Francois I of France, Jacques Cartier sailed in 1534 hoping to find a Western Passage to the riches of the Orient but encountered Newfoundland, the Atlantic Provinces and the Gulf of the St Laurence. He gave the newly discovered land the name of Canada (word adopted from the natives) and returned to France after mapping and naming some of the shores he encountered. On his second voyage in 1535 and 1536, he became the first European to sail the St Laurence River, reaching the Indian village of Stadacona near present day Quebec City. Leaving his larger ships behind, he continued to sail up the St Laurence River to the island of Montreal but when he returned later to Stadacona it was too late in the season to return to France. His 110 man crew built a fort and settled in for the winter. By the end of the winter 85 had survived the scurvy to return to France once the ice had broken up and freed his ships. During his stay Cartier had heard tales of riches in gold and jewels from the natives and, abandoning hopes of finding a passage to the Orient, he returned in 1541 with more ships and men. This time, Cartier opted for a quieter spot up the St Laurence River to set up camp on a hilltop near present day Cap Rouge after finding his previous camp overrun and occupied by a group of Indians. This time he had prepared to establish a colony, bringing seeds and cattle, and called their new settlement Charlesbourg-Royal. The colony was short-lived due to disease and the growing hostility of the natives, and the colony was abandoned in 1542. The first French colony in New France lasted less than a year.

Renewed attempts at colonization met with failure. Forty years later, in 1584, the Marquis de la Roche planned to establish a colony but his principle ship sank before reaching Canada and he abandoned the expedition. In 1598 he purchased the freedom of French prisoners, selected the hardiest of the lot and set sail for Sable Island where they established a settlement. The Marquis sailed to the settlement every year to deliver provisions but failed to do so in 1602. The settlement was abandoned in 1603 after a bloody revolt on the island. The next great effort was made in 1600 by Pierre Chauvin who had been granted a trade monopoly of fur for 10 years provided he established a colony in the St Laurence valley and that he transports 50 colonists per year. He landed at the fur trading post of Tadoussac near the mouth of the St Laurence but most prospective colonists returned with the ship. Of the 16 people that remained in the small outpost only 5 survived the winter by living with the Indians. The settlement was abandoned. Tadoussac was a very poor choice for a new settlement, and over 400 years later has fewer than 900 residents.

A new attempt at colonizing New France and the continental interior was undertaken by Samuel de Champlain when he founded Quebec City in 1608 with an initial permanent population numbering 28. Champlain made great personal efforts and sacrifices managing the fledgling colony, using his own money when the Crown was slow to grant his requests and planning every aspect of the city's construction and growth. By 1620 the population of New France grew to 60 and, according to the Jesuits, in 1626 there were approximately 20 arpents (acres) of land cultivated in all of New France and 78 colonists living in the territory. Twenty years after Quebec's founding and 87 years after the first attempt at establishing a colony there were fewer than 100 residents, but this settlement had become permanent. Quebec was still not much more than a trading post but people continued to arrive from France. They cleared and cultivated the rich land, and the population slowly increased.

The Company of the Hundred Associates

Alarmed at the slow growth of the colony, the rising support costs for New France and the potential of losing the lands along with the fur trade to the English or the Dutch, Cardinal Richelieu created a society in 1627 where a group of investors could buy into the *Compagnie des Cent Associés* (Company of a Hundred Associates) with an initial investment of 3000 livres and receive in return rights to all the lands in the new territory and a monopoly on all the fur trade with New France. In return, the *Compagnie des Cent Associés* was expected to meet population targets of 300 new settlers per year to grow the colony. Only those of French Catholic origin were permitted to settle the new lands, although a few French Huguenots were granted passage and land.

In the 17th century France had a large population which should have been favorable for emigration to New France but it was difficult to recruit French colonists. The French knew of the difficulties in New France, real or rumored, including risk of famine, colder climate, hostile Indians, dangers of the voyage, the costs of the passage which often meant a 3 year commitment of service, and the lack of single women. The *Compagnie des Cent Associés* was far more interested in profit than investing time and effort recruiting from the reluctant French population. Every colonist represented additional recruitment and maintenance costs. The colonies were not self-sufficient and were a financial drain to both the *Compagnie* and the crown as virtually everything had to be imported from France including food, clothing, tools and even soldiers for protection from hostile Indians and the English. In addition, the younger male colonists were potential free-traders, bypassing the *Compagnie's* monopoly of the lucrative fur trade, a business that was worth 200,000 livres per year at that time and the critical foundation of the *Compagnie's* income. Recruitment efforts by the company were very minimal and far fewer French made New France their home than had been agreed upon by the *Compagnie*. People had initially made commitments to settle the new lands but approximately 2 of every 3 who left France with the intent to settle decided to return to the relative comforts of France. Few French nobles or members of the Royal court travelled to the new land and this also set a poor example to the French peasants. As a result of all this, the French were very reluctant to leave France behind

and the colonies grew slowly. In 1666, the population of the English settlements to the south was already 20 times greater than that of New France and continued to grow at a faster pace. The circumstances for the English were very different from that of the French as life in England was considerably worse for the simple peasant and settling in North America was a often a better choice than staying in England.

France was involved in the Thirty Year's War in Europe in 1628 when several of the *Compagnie's* supply ships were ceased by the British. A group of wealthy merchants lead by the Kirke brothers knew of the fragile state of Quebec and, arriving in Quebec in 1629, they and their mercenary soldiers demanded and received the city's surrender from Champlain. The English occupiers left in 1632 with the signing of the peace of Westphalia but the *Compagnie* never fully recovered from the estimated 1 million livres it lost in ships, cargo and several years of trade. It transferred the trading rights to the *Compagnie des Habitants* in 1645. By 1663 the *Compagnie des Cent Associés* was dissolved; the King and his government would attempt to directly manage the growth of the colonies.

By the middle of the 17th century in New France more land had been cleared and enough food was produced to maintain the colony for 6 to 8 months, reducing the colony's reliance on France. The alliances with the Indian nations and tribes were always changing but the colony was starting to become more secure as more immigrants were populating the areas around Quebec City and beyond. There were more French troops in New France and the militia was starting to take shape. The habitants had developed skills in dealing with the cold and the sometimes hostile environment, and had learned to be very resourceful in times of need.

The French had taken land that once belonged to the Hurons and other Indian tribes. These tribes had been on the losing end of a war with the Iroquois alliance and looked to the French for help. The French were also in a difficult situation as the powerful Iroquois had allied themselves with the English and were in a position to disrupt the vital fur trade. The tribes had a poor grasp of the animosity between the European nations and of their politics and were frequently used as pawns in the ongoing disputes between the European colony centers. The natives, however, were becoming increasingly dependent on imported items such as clothing, metal wares, alcohol and weapons, paying for these goods with the North American beaver pelts. The hostilities continued on the fringes of the new North American empire but the older central areas of New France were becoming more secure. The new habitants learned how to live with the climate and the Indian Tribes, and the nobility learned how to manage its lands and its people. The colony was still small in population and unable to defend itself should hostilities break out with the English, and Iroquois raiders frequently attacked the colonial settlements but for a time there was relative peace.

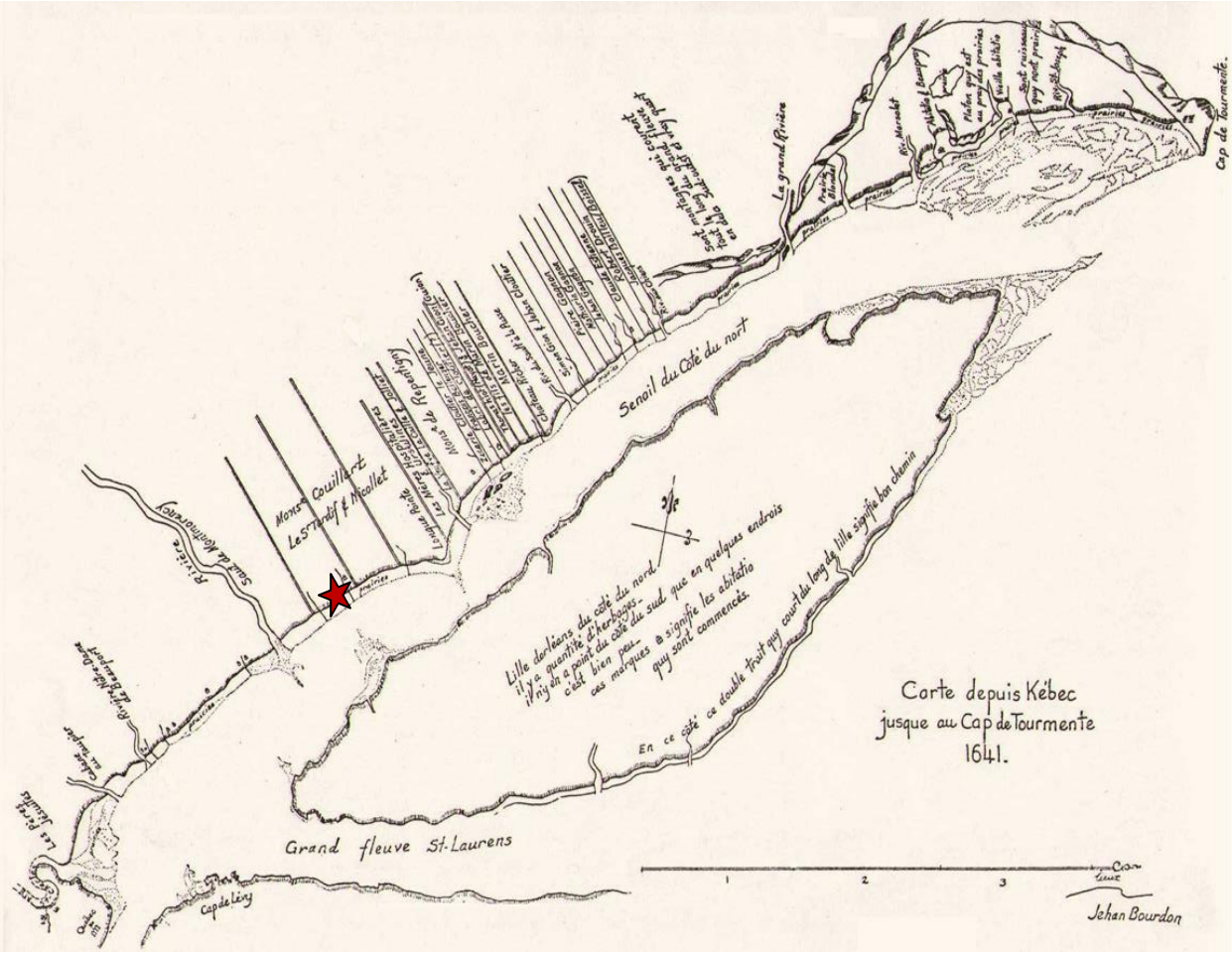
To organize the new lands the French employed a feudal system where the nobility were granted large land concessions with the understanding that they were to move to New France and sub-divide their lands among the new immigrants. These nobles took on a large task as agents of both the French Crown and the Compagnie des Cent Associés and were responsible for the well-being of the new immigrants, called censitaires. The nobles had to build mills for the grain, make requests for food and materials from France and manage their section of the colony. Soldiers were to be provided by the Crown when they could be spared. The church, powerful in France, would also undertake considerable responsibilities. Evangelization became an obsession of the church and many missionaries were sent to convert the Indians at the expense of the crown and the Compagnie. The nobles and the population were kept in moral check by the local priests and the bishops (Monseigneurs) would take on more political responsibilities.

France and the Recruitment of Charles

The investors in the *Compagnie* recruited colonists from among those working their lands in France and in some cases they hired agents that specialized in finding new recruits. The task was straightforward: find a young commoner that is interested in seeking out a new and better life for himself. Typically those recruited did not have better options in France and many were without education or money although there were many exceptions. The recruits would be paid a small salary (typically 50 to 150 livres per year depending on education and trade) and provided land and very basic necessities in the new land once they worked off their 3 year commitment to the company. The advantages presented to the prospects were that they would have a plot of land that they could work and develop and had the ability to support a large family. New France also appealed to the more religious and patriotic as they would be helping France and the Church establish a presence in a pagan land.

It must have been a difficult decision for Charles Gaudin to leave the relative security and comfort of France for the unknowns of the new world. Over 20 families from the Dieppe region came to New France at about the same time as Charles. France had an estimated population of about 20 million in the mid 17th century but a very small percentage of the French were willing to leave France.

Charle's hometown of Beaumais is located in a fertile area of France but living in this area of Europe was far from a peaceful existence. The Normandy area had been fought over for centuries and, at the time of Charles' departure, France was deeply in debt due to the continuous years of war that started with Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu.



Map of the Quebec region of New France in 1641. Note the land near the Montmorency River was consigned to Couillard, the noble that likely sponsored our ancestor Gaudin. This region was subdivided into many lots as more immigrants arrived from France. The approximate location of Charles Gaudin's land, allocated to him in 1656, has been marked.

Image Source: Wikipedia cc

In 1640, 70% of the French government's revenue was spent fighting Spain and the Holy Roman Empire during the latter phase of the 30-Years War. The Catholic Cardinal Richelieu had earlier decided that France would ally itself with and financially support Catholic Sweden, but France sided with the Protestants in their struggle against the Catholic monarch of the Holy Roman Empire. Maintaining a civil war within the Holy Roman Empire and its Catholic Hapsburg rulers would help France weaken its rivals. The French King and Cardinal Richelieu died in the early 1640s. The Spanish coalition supporting the Hapsburgs pushed through the Netherlands and invaded the northern territories of France with the battle lines approximately 100km from Aubermesnil-Beaumais. The end of war with the Holy Roman Empire came in 1648 when a series of peace treaties were signed. France had won the battle against the Holy Roman Empire; it was left fractured but France found itself deeply in debt. The court of Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu had borrowed money from nobles and from other nations so at the time of their death in the mid 1640's they left a difficult situation for the new court. The winding down of hostilities in the war meant there were trained armies under the leadership of charismatic nobles. Combined with the deaths of France's leaders, the new leadership became nervous of these wandering armies

and began taking steps to centralize power by enacting several royal edicts. In 1647 the French parliament, the nobles and the general population were very unhappy with the extra taxation needed to pay the war debt and they resented the forced removal of the nobles that were their leaders. When the regent Queen Anne of Austria visited Normandy she was poorly treated and was not received in the manner befitting royalty.

The French Parliament and the regent Court were now at odds and a civil war began to take shape. The local nobility frequently protected the people in their care against perceived injustice by the centralized government. When several of the Norman counts were jailed in 1648 because they stood against the harsh treatment of the Crown, the people rose and protested to support their lords. The royal court and Cardinal Mazurin were forced to escape from Paris in January 1649 when mayhem began to spread in Paris and many other areas of France, including Normandy. Mazurin returned but was forced into a brief exile once again. This was the time of the Fronde that was to last from 1648 to 1653. There were renewed riots in Paris and throughout Normandy in 1649 against the new government. During the uprisings Normandy would have been deeply affected; the Normans were known for their independent nature and Dieppe was often at the center of many protests. Cardinal Mazarin and the Frondeurs were actively recruiting people to join them and to fight for their cause, and the country was still at war with Spain. The people that once stood behind the nobility soon grew tired of the lords that were dragging France into a civil war and renewed their respect for the centralized monarchy and the newly crowned young king Louis XIII. Eventually the primary leaders of the Fronde were defeated and, unsupported by the people, left France in 1653. The crown could now move its armies against the Spanish and the reign of Louis XIII began.

In France the tradition was that the family land and home was passed from father to eldest son and if there were several sons the land would sometimes be sub-divided. If the father was a tradesman and did not have land the situation was more difficult for a young man trying to establish himself. Often he would have to follow the family business or would be forced to develop a trade of his own. If this was not possible he might join the French Military as a means of making enough money to feed himself but feeding a large family would have been difficult, and being a soldier at this time in France was not a good profession if one valued life.

This was the situation in France at the time that Charles decided to leave. We will never know what motivated Charles to take a chance at a new beginning but these were some of the factors that he must have considered.

Engagés Arrive in New France

Charles Gaudin accepted the challenge from a recruiter to seek a new life in the new world. Like most other colonizing Frenchmen he was an *engagé* of a Noble, probably Guillaume Couillard. The Couillard family at this time in New France cultivated over 100 acres of land and owned a flour mill that had been built in 1639. Guillaume Couillard had married Guillemette Hébert, the daughter of the first colonist Louis Hébert, and inherited half his land upon the death of Louis in 1627. The Couillards were one of the largest landholders in the region, certainly knew the governor Jean le Lauzon very well, and had ties though marriage to Le Tardif, the administrator for the *Compagnie des Cent Associés*. The Couillards had several *engagés* providing the labour to run their estate. In exchange for passage from France, Charles was likely indebted for a period of 3 years to his sponsor. He was provided shelter, clothing, food and a small salary for his services in a variety of manual tasks that may have included clearing and cultivating the seigneur's land, running his mills and constructing buildings. Other tasks may have included being a household servant doing what chores that needed to be tended to like many other *engagés*. *Engagés* received 60 or 75 Livres per year while those with a background in a trade

Guillaume Couillard

such as a carpenter or a mason received 125 to 150 Livres per year. For reference, a barn in the early 1700's cost approximately 200 Livres to build and a hired farmhand earned about 150 Livres per year. It is not known if Charles had a specific trade but like many of his generation in New France he became a master of many trades. After his dept was cleared in 1656, Charles was provided land to use as his own and became a *censitaire,* a "habitant".

According to the Catalogue des Immigrants 1632-1662 by Marcel Trudel, 4 to 6 ships arrived from France in June of 1656, and states that a Godin was on one of them: the ships *Taureau*, the *Fortune*, the *René* and the *Saint Sebastien* are known. On further research, other references state an Yves Godin was listed as a passenger in the *Fortune.* It is unlikely that Charles would have been released from this indenture so quickly. Considering the period of service typically required of an *engagé* is 3 years and Charles was fully released from his dept in 1656, he likely signed up in France in 1653 and arrived in New France in 1653 or 1654. Many of these *engagés* started working off their debt in France before sailing for the new land, typically with preparing the ships and handling cargo. The overall cost of a shipping expedition was between 12,000 and 15,000 Livres, and it typically included 12-15 sailors, 10 soldiers and 10 agents.

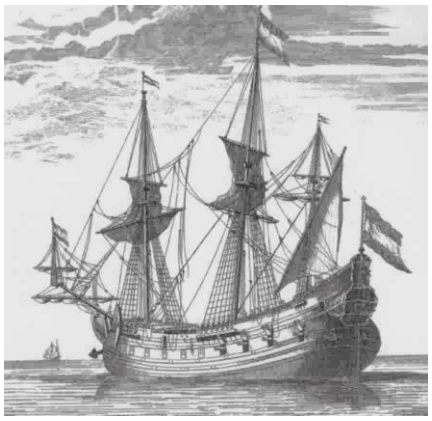
Unfortunately, there are no comprehensive lists of immigrants arriving in Canada prior to 1865 because, up to that year, the government didn't require shipping companies to keep passenger manifests. Yves Godin did not stay (he returned to France with the ship), but there were other Godin arrivals that did. Among them was Elie Godin, a Huguenot, who established himself in the area of Quebec, and Pierre Gaudin dit Châtillon, who arrived in Ville-Marie just in time to defend against an attack from the Iroquois, an event that saved the Ville Marie colony and likely prevented Canada from being included into the present-day United States. Elie did not have any male heirs, but Pierre did. Since his name is the same as ours and his decedents lived in the same areas as ours there is frequent confusion in the interpretation of the records by various genealogists. There are two distinct primary lineages of Gaudins or Godins in New France.

There were few ships that arrived in Quebec City at the time. In 1653, 2 ships from France arrived in Quebec City: the "Le Patriarche d'Abraham" piloted by captain Guillaume Poulet and arriving in Quebec on August 8th, and a ship (name unknown) piloted by captain Jean Pointel arriving in Quebec in August (captured by the English on the return trip). A third ship in 1653, "Le Saint-Nicolas" piloted by captain Pierre LeBesson, sailed for Ville Marie (Montreal). This ship indicated Pierre Gaudin dit Châtillon from a passenger list compiled by a famous passenger: Sister Marguerite de Bourgeoys. The history of this ship is discussed under the title "La Grande Recrue".

In 1654, there were 6 ships that arrived in Quebec but 2 were from La Rochelle and one from Nantes, unlikely embarkation points for Charles. In 1654 Port Royal in Acadia was under siege by the American Englishman Robert Sedgwick and it was dangerous for French vessels to sail. The following ships arrive from Dieppe in 1654: "La Fortune" with Captain Pierre LeBesson on July 14th, "Le Petit Saint-Jean" with Captain Rene Boutin, and "Le Saint-Nicolas" with an unknown captain (sunk in Quebec).

There were several points of embarkation for immigrants to Nouvelle France. Dieppe is the likely point of embarkation for Charles as he lived within a few kilometers of this coastal town.

Verrazano set sail from this port in 1524 to found the settlement that later became New York City. Samuel Champlain, the great voyager, left from this port in 1603 and founded Quebec City in 1608. In 1639, three Augustine priests left to establish the first hospital in Nouvelle France.



Barque Longue 17th Century

The ocean crossings were very difficult. Each ship, built in the Barque style carried between 80 and 120 passengers depending on its size. Most ships were remarkably small for such an extensive voyage. It took 3 to 6 weeks or more for the crossing as it wasn't unusual for a ship to be blown off course. There are recorded instances of ship taking over 100 days. Captains had to battle the currents and the storms, pirates, the hostile English and Dutch fleets, and navigate in dangerous waters with ships that were often in poor condition and sailing against the prevailing winds. Several ships were lost to the elements, ran aground in the St Laurence or were taken by pirates as war prizes. Some ships used in the 17th century were in such poor condition that several had to return to France before completing the voyage. Passengers were in cramped quarters sharing space with provisions and domestic animals. Sickness and death were common on these ships and often ships arrived with fewer people than the numbers they departed with. Without passenger lists the losses are often difficult to determine

Unfortunately we do not know what family or life Charles left behind. It must have been very difficult for the emigrants from France to leave their country and to give their friends and families a final goodbye, knowing they will never see each other ever again. There are recorded instances of *engagés* that did not want to fulfill their commitments and either did not show for the sailing date or jumped off the ship as it was about to leave port and swam back to shore.

Initially, most ships made for Acadia, Quebec City or Tadoussac to offload supplies and passengers, and to take on furs. Later on, common ports in New France included Three Rivers and Ville-Marie (Montreal).

The Nobility

Guillaume Couillard arrived in New France in 1613 at the age of 22. He was the first French colonist to rise to the ranks of nobility in 1654 when he received his letters in exchanges for the services rendered to the colony. He was an employee of the Compagnie des Cent-Associés, a craftsman, soldier, ship caulker, ship captain and farmer, and his sons participated in fishing and the fur trade. His new title was Sieur de l'Espinay. He spent considerable time with Champlain in planning and building the new colony, and married Marie-Guillemette, the daughter of the first colonist Louis Hebert. Guillaume appeared to have been a sponsor for Charles Gaudin, but the seigneur for Charles was De Lauzon.

The nobility had a great role in the development of New France, as did the church and the Compagnie. They were the link between the people and the King. They were responsible for the defense of the new land and for maintaining law and order. They were often the judges in disputes and helped families flourish. The land development was accomplished thanks to the encouragement of the nobles as their income was dependant on the success of the peasantry. This seigneurial system served the people of New France well in the absence of other officials. The church provided a focal point for the locals and common goals, whereas the nobility helped endure prosperity through the organization of the farming peasants and shared resources such as the flour mills and saw mills. The Compagnie supplied the public officials, ensured shipping between the old and the new lands and supplied the funds necessary to sustain and protect the

colony as a whole. Although life seemed at times physically difficult for the Censitaires they did have structure and support, and life was not much easier for the nobility in early Quebec either.

As a Noble, de Lauzon received a considerable amount of land from the King with the understanding that he would in turn provide some of the land to the clergy and encourage the growth of the population, both in numbers and economically. The area did eventually become self sufficient, providing much of its own grain and food products, although the population growth was less than desirable. Tools eventually were being produced locally. Trade with France was not strong due to the loss of ships to the Anglo-Dutch raiders but sufficient ships got through to provide the necessary supplies and soldiers for the survival of the colony. Individuals were not permitted to own land but they took care of it as their own, with encouragement from the nobles to ensure the best possible land development and social stability.

Charles' New Homestead

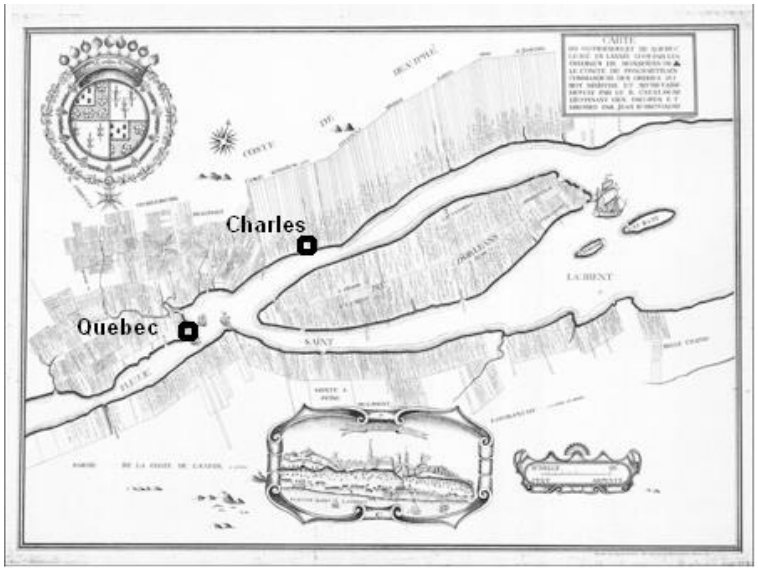
Charles must have completed his contract to the noble's satisfaction as he was granted excellent land along the St Laurence River, east of the Montmorency river and of Quebec City. His neighbour to the west was Denis Guyon, to the east Nicolas Roussin and to the north were the nobles Guillemette Hébert and Guillaume Couillard.

Radial pattern of a village near Quebec City

Charles was also allowed to take Marie Boucher's hand in marriage. She was a very young girl but at the time it was important to establish oneself in the land and to begin a family as soon as possible. Marriages between teenagers were encouraged in this day. Youthful and healthy, they could begin a family sooner and stay fertile longer. This marriage would have put considerable pressure on Charles to establish himself on the land, to build a house and begin planning his growing season for the food he would need for the year to come.

Charles was provided land on the Côte de Beaupré in an area called L'Ange Gardien. It is one of the oldest concessions in Canada and among the first to be populated. He was on the north shore with a view of L'Île d'Orléans and within walking distance of the Montmorency Falls. Other settlements in the immediate area included Beauport, Château-Richer, Boischatel and Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.

The long, narrow track of land Charles had received a few months before his marriage was typical of the St Laurence shores. The land in early Quebec was divided into long, narrow lots that started at the waterway, with a width to length ratio of about 1-10. The land was measured in arpents. An arpent was roughly the area of an acre (1 Acre = 1.184 Arpents) but more frequently, the arpent was used to denote a linear measurement along the waterway (1 Arpent = 192 ft = 58.5 meters). In areas of curved waterways the lots would take on different shapes and in towns the lots would radiate out like spokes of a wheel. It was a somewhat fair system that gave everyone access to roads and the waterway, to lumber and fishing — important resources for the colonists. The geography and topology of the land would have the greatest variety in this strip-farm configuration, with swampy, sandy land near the water, sloped grasslands and woodlands. It was also an easy to survey and could be done with only a couple of measurements. The surveyor's mark was typically a stone with a shard of pottery or glass underneath it. Access to the water was important for transportation and fishing, the grasslands for crops and cattle and the



Location of Charles' lot: L'Ange Gardien on the Beaupré

forested area was a source of wood for heating and construction, and typically was the area set aside for pigs. The road for the area ran closer to shore (below the escarpment) with most of the houses set along the road where they could view one-another.

Sometimes the depth of the land was not specified and some lots were considered to have a depth of 4.5 miles in Chateau-Richer, even though their width was about 120 meters.

The division of land followed an old French feudal system but it was the most appropriate system for New France. The land was heavily forested and the best transportation was along the waterways therefore the long, narrow strips allowed the best access to transportation. In contrast, the English to the south employed a different system that tended to prefer larger lands that could be worked with slave labour.

This configuration allowed the rural population to construct homes relatively close together along the roadways running parallel to the river. This provided for mutual protection from hostile Indians parties that did attack settlers fairly frequently throughout the early development of New France, although this was less common along the Beaupré coast than in other areas such as the south shore and L'Île d'Orléans. With all the houses along the common roadway in view of one another it was easier to maintain contact with the neighbours without having to move into town and farmers remained close to what they tended. At a time of limited transportation this configuration suited the population very well.

There were disadvantages to this type of configuration. Taking care of the land involved a considerable amount of walking. Depending on the topology some land was difficult to manage in these long strips, a common occurrence in the Quebec area due to the escarpment. Another issue was the inheritance laws at the time that encouraged the landowner to redistribute sections of the lot to their offspring, resulting in smaller lots. It was very common practice to sub-divide, trade and sell rights to the lots.

The King granted land to nobles with the understanding that these lands would be provided to the settlers, developed and contribute to the economy. The land owners were called Seigneurs, the land they were given was called a Seigneurie or a fief, and the occupants of the land, habitants, were called censitaires. These censitaires would clear the land, pay the lease (cens) that was typically 1 to 2 sols per arpent (this rate rose over the years) and often included capons, butter or pigs. The censitaires would be required to grind their grains at the mill owned by the seigneur, for a fee typically 1/13th of the flour. They also paid a dîme (tithe) to the church set at 1/26th of the income, although it was originally set at 1/13th but was changed in 1680 due to protests. The people pointed out that they also contributed and absorbed the cost of building and maintaining the church, raised special funds for the church and took on some of its debt. They also felt that funding for the missionaries should be the responsibility of the greater church in France and Rome. Based on an older French tradition, the fees to the seigneur were due on the feast day of St Michael, on September 29th, shortly after harvest and before winter. Censitaires from the whole fief would gather at the noble's house and deliver his dues, with everything recorded by the local notary. One cannot imagine the number of hams and capons the servants had to deal with

on this day. Anyone in arrears would receive a notice from the notary, with an underlying threat of confiscation of the land and possessions.

Plow with wood blade
Source: Musée de la Civilisation

In 1636, it took about 1 year for 1 man to clear 2 arpents of land, but this varied greatly by the type of topology a habitant happened to have on his land. The first inhabitants of the land faced a daunting task as all the virgin lots were typically filled with shrubs and trees and difficult to clear. The agreement with the seigneur invariable included a rate at which the land had to be cleared of trees (any oak trees were reserved for use by the King's navy). The progress was slow and it took time to clear all the land. About 100 years later, in 1739, most farms were smaller that 100 arpents, and in many areas were smaller than 40 or 50 arpents. The land often became sub-divided among children and it was often difficult for the farmer to expand but most were content with generating only as much food as they required for the year and not much more.

In terms of yield, the newly cleared, virgin land would yield a tremendous amount with ratios of 25 to 1 or better. After the initial rich harvests the soils would become exhausted and yield dropped. The yields on the farms varied season to season but 6 to 1 was an estimated overall average with each acre producing from 10 to 14 bushels. The farmers eventually learned to summer fallow to replenish them but this was labour-intensive and not encouraged by the seigneur. They did rotate the crops at times and this helped. The habitants were often able to produce some excess and by 1736 were exporting 100,000 bushels to other areas of North America and the Caribbean.

The lots were frequently lined with fences to keep the animals from damaging crops and gardens, and to keep the animals from wandering away. With the length of the lots this took considerable effort. The fences were built in a manner that they did not require nailing, and they could be disassembled if required.

Living Conditions for the Habitant

There were many obligations and responsibilities for the censitaires. They did not own the land but were granted the right to use it, and this right could be taken away if the land was not worked to its full potential. This did happen frequently as many of the censitaires would only clear the land which they needed for their own needs and did not produce surplus leaving much of the land undeveloped. Charles did give up some of his land to a former engagé. Charles had to clear, cultivate and maintain the land that he was conceded by the seigneur. He had to build a house with the timber and stones that were on his land or that he could purchase with his meager income. He was required to pay the cens. He used the flour mill owned and operated by the seigneur and paid a portion of the crop for its use. He also had to provide several days of free labour to the seigneur known as the corvée or rente. He also paid the annual dîme to support the clergy and its activities. He was also responsible for maintaining the roads that crossed his property and by royal decree he had to build ditches along this road. He could be called upon to provide some military service and would frequently volunteer to help the church and neighbors.

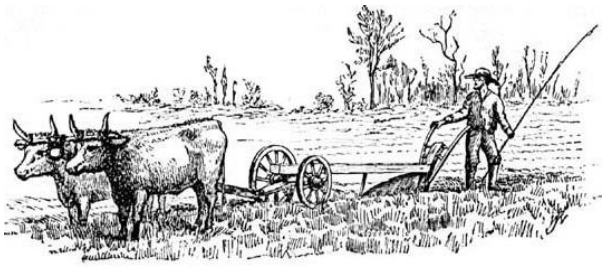
This system worked well for the settlers, as they had a lord that would watch over them, encouraged them and protected them. Since it was in the best interest to the seigneur for the habitants to succeed there was pressure on the colonists to make good use of their land, and they did. With little exception the settlers were able to grow enough grain to sustain themselves and become self-sufficient. The church also played an important role in creating the community

and was a focal point for the colonists where they could gather, organize and help one-another. The Seigniorial dues were comparatively light, as were the clergy's tithe for the church. The seigneurs were an elevated class but were not rendered wealthy from the collected dues of the citizens in their charge, and they often faced the same fay-to-day challenges as the censitaires.

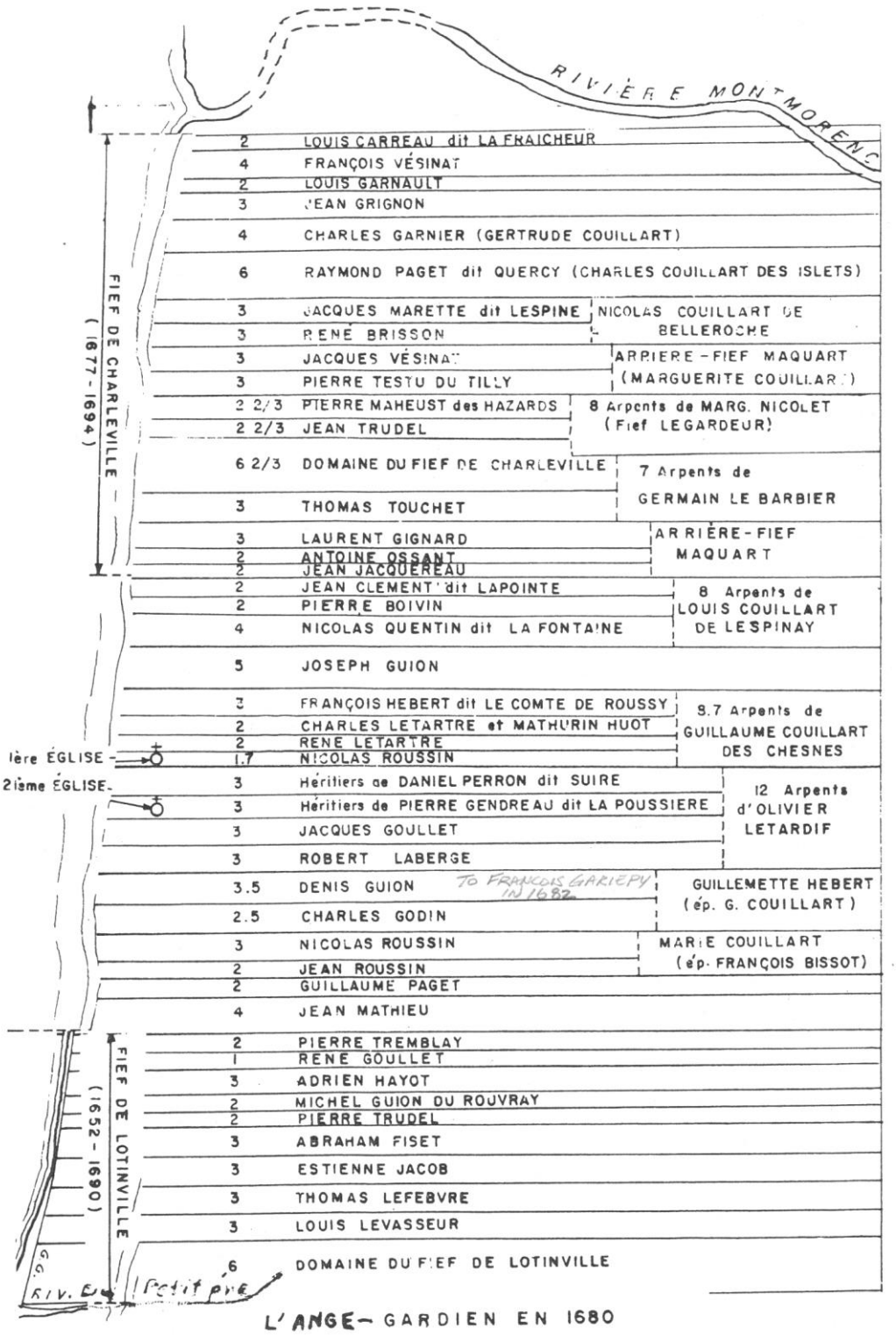
In the 1660's Jean Talon tried to get the citizens to move toward city centers for better defense and to promote trades and a better economy. He organized several areas around the city in a radial pattern but there was little enthusiasm for this type of arrangement. After Talon left the new intendant Meules wrote to the King that the French Canadians were too much at liberty to speak their minds. The King issued edicts against the formation of town centers, ruling for fines of 100 livres for those that rented homes or rooms to people that were already engaged in farming. Reasons for this reversal were likely because he saw the need to populate more land area and for the peasants to have larger families. The King was also concerned about the attitude of the population and felt that town centers may invite too much free talk. Local government however had a more difficult time controlling a rural peasant population that was scattered as opposed to living in tighter communities such as towns and cities. The people, accustomed to being independent, tended to be more vocal and had a greater direct impact on establishing the regulations that controlled the people and the lands.

Regardless of the King's edict, town centers naturally formed over the years with the church as the nucleus. As censitaires got older they typically sold their land or gave it to a family member. They would then build a house near the church. Other retirees would also build nearby so that over the years towns were formed. Once this cycle began in a community it was difficult to move the church. The people had already begun building their homes and there was some emotional attachment to the church cemetery.

Producing food was always a concern especially for Charles and Marie and their growing family. They had to place great reliance on their crops to carry them over the winter and into the following season. Hunting and fishing helped supplement their diets, although this typically required the permission of the seigneur and a fee may have also been required. Cutting wood ensured fuel for cooking and heating over the winter. When they initially arrived beasts of burden were unavailable, so much of the work on the farm would have been done by hand. Metal was also difficult to get hold of in the early days so plows would wear quickly, or stones were used as the cutting edge. They sold any surplus food to earn a little extra money to purchase necessary items, and most male family members took on odd jobs to earn extra income.



The common staples were wheat, barley and peas, with wheat being by far the most common crop. Buckwheat was also common as it grows well in the Canadian climate and is a main ingredient in several traditional French foods. Corn was not a major crop in this part of Quebec, nor were potatoes. The additional needs of the farmer's family were provided for by the use of extensive gardens usually located near the homestead. In these gardens they grew carrots, onions, cabbage, lettuce, beans, cucumbers, beets, squash and radishes. They also grew some spices, like marjoram, thyme and parsnips. Tobacco was often grown as many of the male inhabitants smoked, a habit that was disliked by the clergy and the government because some feared the habitants would begin purchasing better quality tobacco grown outside the colony. Fruit trees were also common, such as apples and plum. Pear trees were grown in the warmer climate of Montreal, including some vineyards. Hemp was also grown in the forests for ropemaking and flax provided other fibers.



The land plots in 1667 from <u>Our French Canadian Ancesters</u> by Andre Lafontaine. The St Laurence River is on the left side (North is to the right). Charles is on the lower center of the map. The dotted line of the Montmorency River are the falls.

Settlers ate the foods as they came to season. Nuts and berries, garden vegetables and fruit were standard fare. Outdoor cellars were used for storing food. Bread, specifically dark bread (by royal decree), was a staple on Canadian tables. In the spring settlers tapped into the maple trees to gather maple water to make syrup. Over the winter the diet often consisted of meat and eggs. The meat was preserved in the cold winter ground, or salted. Cattle were the most important livestock and once the cattle population started growing, virtually every inhabitant owned 2 or 3 cows and an ox. Charles owned 5 beasts of burden in 1667.

Horses started becoming common in the latter part of the 1600's but the government complained about the drain on the economy by shipping these horses. According to a Jesuit letter there were no horses in the new world in 1664. There were no priorities on bring horses as there was concern that valuable feed, which could be used on cattle, would be wasted on the horses. To address this concern a maximum of 2 horses and a foal was imposed on the habitants in 1709. Horses were important work animals and this is the reason there wasn't an all-out ban. The French inhabitants loved to ride their horses as fast as they could and initially many kept horses just for transportation, deemed an unnecessary luxury in those days. Some people in the government saw that the young Canadians were using the horses too much and were in danger of losing their roots; many had been riding the horses so extensively that there was fear that they would forget how to snowshoe and lose the advantage they have over the English in winter warfare. Ordinances had to be passed to control the speed at which these horses could be ridden in the vicinity of people, subject to a fine. For instance, if a person was knocked over by a horse, there was a fine of 10 Livres imposed, and riders had to trot when within the area of the church to prevent entanglements and accidents. The horses proved themselves as valuable draft animals and were easier to train and control than the oxen were, and they became an important part of rural life.

Pigs were also quite common and many were turned loose into the forest to feed themselves. Fowl such as chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys were common on the early farms. In fact, some of the rentes that were paid to the seigneurs were paid in capons, hams, butter or other common foods.

Habitants typically build 3 separate barn structures: one for the cattle, one for horses, and another for storing the hay and grains. They may also have a chicken coop. Barn-raising by the community was rare so the habitant often had to seek help from a neighbor or hire a carpenter to help build the structures. A building 20 feet by 30 feet could cost several hundred Livres, so it was an expensive investment considering the income for a habitant at this time was about 200 Livres per year.

Metal tools were initially imported from Europe but eventually foundries were set up in various parts of Quebec, starting with the first foundry in Montreal in 1674 and a larger foundry just north of Three Rivers in 1730. Farmers had to repair their own tools or to improvise with what was available. When metal became available they would use it on the leading edges of their plows.

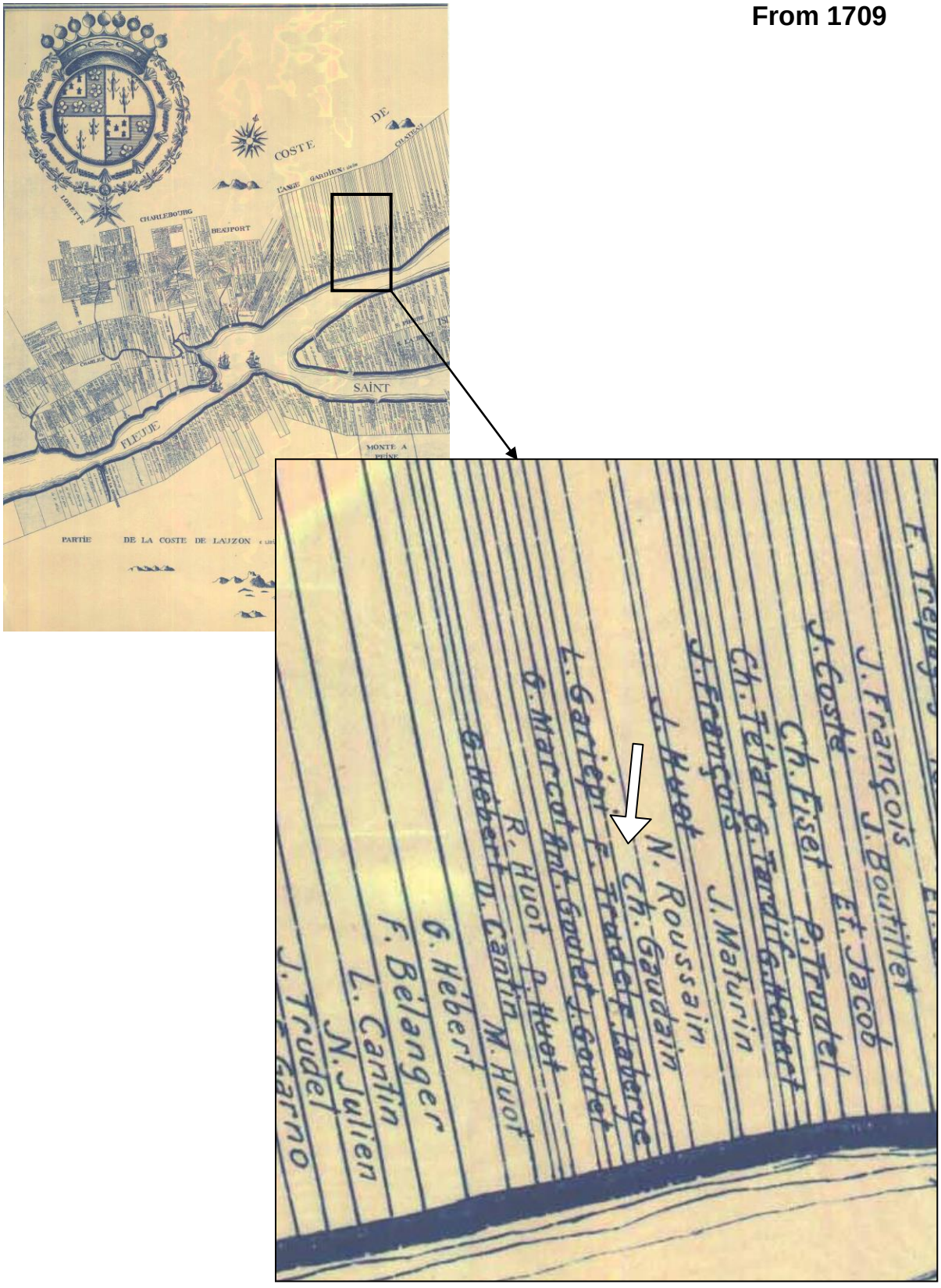
The winter period offered the habitants some relief from tending to the garden and worrying about the crop but there were still tasks to accomplish. Winter was the best time for cutting and moving timber as it was easier to use sleds on the winter snow than wheeled carts on the rocky, muddy and uneven ground of the summertime. Generally, however, winter was a time of peace and many habitants looked forward to the coming of winter when they could sit by the fire, play cards and visit with neighbours.

Life on the farm was certainly not one of riches and often the farmer had just enough harvested to feed the family and pay the cens, dîmes and the rentes, and a few bushels to sell for coin that could be used to buy supplies, clothing and tools. The garden and livestock were an important supplement to their diet. In addition, most of the habitants hunted and fished from time to time and in the fall there were so many eels in the St Laurence that it wasn't uncommon for two men to catch several thousand in one night by using netting techniques from shore and with canoes. In the winter they netted the fish below the ice.

Live was harsh for Charles and the other colonists but some things were easier in the colonies as opposed to their French homeland. Land was much more available and cheaper to lease. Artisans would be deemed masters much sooner so many settlers and their decedents had the opportunity to try their hands at different trades. Many people changed profession on a regular basis and many developed skills in a variety of areas. The French continued to do what worked and were slow to adopt modern methods but were content to live their lives under God and the King.

Estimated original location of land granted to Charles Gaudin in 1656 using a 2010 image in Google Earth (centered approximately 46°55'01"N - 71°05'09"W). Although he was granted 3 arpents of land (an arpent was approximately 58 meters wide) in 1656, the map indicates what seemed to be the "Home" arpent, the one that was retained by Charles in 1709. The land was located by using Google Earth and superimposing 2 other maps. Another clue to its location is the road in the residential area to the immediate west called Rue Gariépy, the name of the neighbor of Charles in 1709.

From 1709


COSTE
DE
CHARLEBOURG
BEAUPORT
SAINT
FLEUVE
MONTE A
PARTIE
DE LA COSTE DE LAUZON
E. Trepagny
J. François
J. Boutillet
J. Jacob
J. Coste
Et. Jacob
Ch. Fiset
P. Trudel
Ch. Fiset
G. Tardif
J. François
J. Maturin
J. Huot
N. Roussain
Ch. Gaudain
L. Garien
F. Fradet
J. Gaudet
G. Marcot
Ant. Gaudet
J. Gaudet
R. Huot
P. Huot
G. Hebert
D. Cantin
M. Huot
G. Hebert
F. Belanger
L. Cantin
N. Julien
J. Trudel
Garno

Flax and hemp seeds were sent to the new world so that clothing manufacturing could be done locally and many households made their own cloth. Clothing imported from France was very expensive so many habitants wore skins and furs in addition to the domestically make cloth. Winter boots were a type of mukluk made of fur and leather. The clothing they wore often had been patched many times. Wool cloth became more popular as the sheep industry grew but its growth was slow. Most habitants owned two changes of clothes: those worn day-to-day, and those worn to social events like church. Clothing was often made within the community, and women often shared a spinning wheel.

The homes of the early settlers consisted of a series of posts driven into the ground, palisade-style, chinked with clay and covered with boards. The floor was eventually covered with wooden planks and the roof was typically thatched or of planks. Cut wood was expensive and difficult to obtain in the early days. Some homes were build in a more standard style of squared-off logs that were stacked horizontally and interlocked, covered in planks and sometimes plastered, and the floor and ceiling planks. Toward the end of the 17th century, the homes took on the form of a "colombage" which consisted of a stone base with the upper portions made of wood (Tudor style). The more intricate buildings were made entirely of stone. The stone in many areas of Quebec was difficult to cut and so many of the homes tended to not use much stone or the builders used ample cement to keep the stones in place. The walls of a stone house were typically up to 2 feet thick and the windows recessed into the wall. The roofs were in the Normand style with a high pitch and therefore had very large attics that could serve as additional living space.

Example of 17th century French Style of vertical board construction
Image: Maison Lamontagne

The typical basic peasant home had 2 bedrooms: a master bedroom for the husband, wife and the newborn and the second room for the other children who usually shared a bed. The kitchen and dining room were used extensively, and a sitting room for comfort and for having guests. Additions were added to homes to accommodate the larger families. The fireplaces were initially made of stone or clay, and later in the 18th century were replaced with iron stoves. Many habitants had ovens outside for baking bread but typically the flour mill also had ovens were the habitant could bake their bread. All the furniture within the house was typically made by the habitant. Habitants were required by law to build an outdoor latrine (in France at the time this filth was often thrown in the streets).

Large Historical stone house in Parc Montmorency

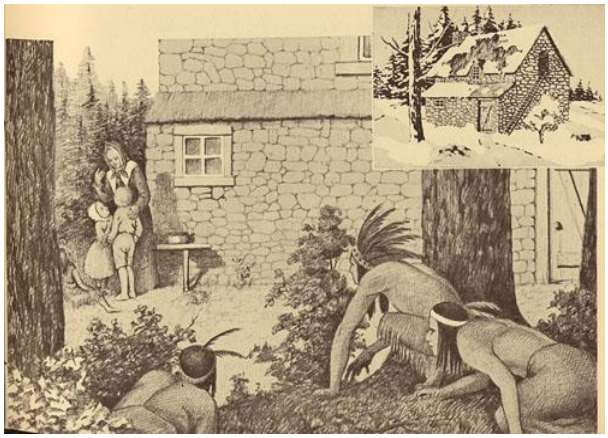
The habitant was considered resourceful and industrious; in addition to the house and its furniture he had to build a barn, stable and perhaps a coop. He had to clear the land, cultivate and care for the livestock and garden.

The habitant had to be a master of all trades. He had to learn how to prepare land and grow a variety of crops, learn to care for animals, build houses of stone and wood, learn to hunt and fish, build furniture and tools, learn how to make rope and cloth, prepare and store food and protect themselves from marauding Indians.

The Early Community

Colonists didn't just worry about their own survival. They frequently had to help support the soldiers that were sent from France and those that were recruited from their ranks. These soldiers provided protection from the natives and the English. Not all Indians viewed the French with hostility. Indian allies taught the French what they needed to know about the land, and what they needed to do to survive the elements. Indians supplied the furs and the extra soldiers needed to protect the colonies. Their contribution was critical to the economy and to the very survival of the early colony. The coureurs-des-bois and voyageurs contributed immensely to the living standards of the settlers unaccustomed to life in a cold climate. It was through their contact with the natives that allowed the habitants to develop many of their unique customs and methods of survival required to survive the winters.

The efforts of the French to bring the Indians under their moral, religious and legal control was a difficult task, and each Indian nation, as diverse as European nations, reluctantly determined its own direction and relationship with the European settlers. The native tribes, friend and foe alike, suffered terribly from their alliances with the European settlers. The Hurons were at peace with the settlers, but it was a fragile peace. The Catholic missionaries were amongst the first to arrive in the new world and felt it was their god-given duty to convert the natives whom they'd considered ripe for conversion. The natives regarded the Catholic religion suspiciously as its arrival coincided with the arrival of diseases that decimated the Indian population. The diseases that often were merely troublesome for the Europeans were deadly to the Indians. Smallpox spread rampantly to all areas of North America and decimated the native populations; deaths of 35% to 50%, and sometimes up to 80% of a tribe were not uncommon. In 1650 it is estimated that the Indian population in the Quebec region was reduced to less than half what it was before the arrival of Europeans.



Under surveillance at the School *Source: VMC*

The war against the Iroquois sapped the fighting strength of the French. For the first 100 years of the colony the cities and rural centers had to be under constant vigilance against the potential for an attack by the natives. Fields were seeded and harvested under the careful watch of an armed family member or neighbour.

Live with the Hurons and other tribes in the Quebec and Beaupre coastal region was amicable and there were very few confrontations or other incidents. To be feared however were the Iroquois nation from the South and their allies to the West, including the Mohawks. In the 17th century there were frequent confrontations that resulted in the deaths of people from both sides. In the spring of 1660 there was an Iroquois raid on the Beaupré coast. Most residents of the area had advanced warning of the raid and had already moved to the fort in Quebec where they stayed for almost 2 weeks until the band was dispersed by French and Indian allies, causing a late planting season. A settler's wife and one of her children died in a gun battle. The following year another raiding party killed 8 residents of the Beaupré coast and 7 on Isle d'Orléans. These are but a couple of examples of the many battles between the French and the Iroquois for control of the territories and the fur trade.

In 1684, the Algonquians trespassed on Illinois and Miami tribe territories searching for fur, prompting the Iroquois to renew their attacks. There were many violent confrontations between the French and their Indian allies, and the English and their Iroquois allies in these times. In the end, the rapid expansion and change present by the new colonies were too much for the native cultures and all of the native cultures suffered as a result. War, illness and European culture took their toll on the tribes. The English continued to expand and push toward the west and the French eventually were unable to stop them.

QUEBEC, 1700

The church in the 1660's, under Laval, attempted to control both the French population and the government but failed at both. The church still represented a social structure and helped govern the moral and social direction of the inhabitants, but ultimately the settlers were much freer than their European counterparts to make their own decisions and become masters of their own destinies. They simply did not have the same tolerance for politics as their French counterparts. New France was not as prone to internal strife as was France at the time because the people themselves were the ones that could make things easier. The crown seemed more interested in maintaining the lucrative fur trade and the colonials were often seen as a support network for this trade. Evidence of this was in the raids executed by the French soldiers against any blockage of trade in the 17th century and of laws that regulated and monopolized the fur trade. Ultimately, however, the survival of the colony depended on the fur trade to bring money, goods and stability to the region. The nobility in the region also suffered the same trials and shortages as the habitants and understood the plight of the settlers better than the French crown. The effect was the intendants, under the gaze of the company, the Crown and the Church, created laws and regulations that would address the unique situation of the French in New France and keep the population happy and productive. This increased the differences between the Old and New Worlds, to the benefit of freedom for the habitants.

There were a few major centers in the 17th century. These included Quebec City, Montreal (Ville-Marie), Three-Rivers and Louisburg. These centers were the points where contact with Europe was maintained through shipping. Voyagers would make their way to these centers to sell their

furs and stock up on trade items. The habitants would purchase their metal needs and sell their grains. There were artisans and tradesmen in these centers that produced the goods needed in the colony and the small excess was sold to markets in Europe and the Caribbean.

There were few large labour corvées compared to France. These corvées were used for special "capital" projects, such as building a 7ft wall around the city of Montreal in 1716 & 1717. Habitants, independent in nature, protested against the forced labour because they knew the fortress at Louisburg was entirely financed by the King and felt that the King should pay for future capital projects. The habitants did work together voluntarily on other projects such as building the churches and roads. There was militia service required at different times for men between 16 and 60 years old. These required militia services were to help train the population in the event of defense against the English from the southern settlements and against any possible Indian uprising.

Rang depths on the South Shore today. It was (and still is) far easier to socialize with those from one's own rang. Note the grouping of houses on the 1-2 Rang and 3-4 Rang and a total lack of houses on the 2-3 rang. There are few roads interconnecting the rangs.

The perils of living in a cold, sometimes hostile land outside of city centers would shape the character of the French Canadians. They socialized more and helped each other out without relying on the government. Their immediate neighbours ("premier voisins") were treated like family and were invited to family functions. If an animal was butchered a portion of it was almost always sent to the neighbours, and extra loaves of bread or other cooked items would be baked for the neighbours. They would work on projects together, such as building a barn or maintaining

a roadway, or watching out for each other whenever there was a threat from the Indians. They relied on each other for advice, ideas and planning. Their neighbour's children became future in-laws.

The character of the French society was invariably tied to the land distribution. The land plots were in long strips from the shores of the St Laurence and any other major waterway. When all the waterfront properties had been filled more rows were created further inland. All the waterfront properties had been allocated by 1722. Each of these new rows ("rang") would require a road and eventually several depths of parallel roads would develop along the countryside. In some areas, the habitants of the first row moved to the opposite ends of their lots to have neighbours across the street creating what is called a double row ("rang double"). Churches that were initially built close to the waterway were moved to the "rang" roads to provide easier access for more people. There was a minor social class that developed among those of the "rangs", a type of rang fraternity. Those of the first "rang" had been there the longest and felt they had a more elevated status than those of the 2nd rang, and those of the second were out-of-touch with those of the 3rd and 4th rangs. Each rang would have its own roads and church, and communities were formed in this manner.

Another person that became important in the family was the parish priest but before there could be a parish priest there needed to be a church. Once an area was established the habitants went to task building the first chapel or church to attract the attention of the bishop and put forward their request for a priest. The priest was typically the most educated person in the parish, being able to read and write and, with his contacts within the church organization, was able to obtain what a person required. The priest was also the peacemaker and judge and was frequently called upon to resolve conflicts. The priest held more political power than the seigneur as he had the ear of the Bishop, and the Bishop had direct influence on the direction of the colony's laws and edicts.

Chalice of Mgr de Laval (1674)
Source: VMC

The bishop, Msg de Laval, met with Charles on occasion for the construction of the first church in L'Ange Gardien, the area in which Charles lived. Charles was a long-standing church committee member. His fellow members included the prominent families of Jacques Vériza and Jean Trudel. The trio were responsible for the initial land selection and acquisition for the church in 1672. Construction started in 1675 and the first mass was conducted in 1676. It was deemed an honor to have been elected to the committee and they were allowed preferential seating during mass.

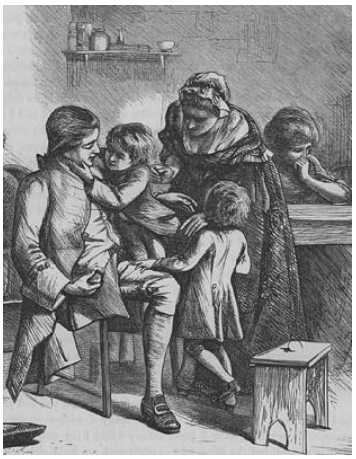
Seating in the church followed the social ranks: first were the nobility and officials, next were the military ranks, next were the church wardens, next were the habitants. They also entered and exited the church in this sequence (a tradition still held today in French Catholic mass). Church Wardens ("guardiens") were elected by the population every year and they took care of the affairs of the church normally for a period of up to 3 years but Charles seems to have been associated with church business for a much longer period. He may have been responsible for the church finances as his name appears in early notarized documents regarding debts owed to and by the church.

There was little formal schooling for children. Schools were seen as a distraction from the chores that needed to be completed on the farm. Girls were even less likely to be schooled due to the custom at the time. There were colleges and schools that opened in the community; some taught specific trades and others provided training for religious vocation. What boys needed to know for

living was taught in the family home, or the parish priest would take the task of training the youth in his parish to read and write.

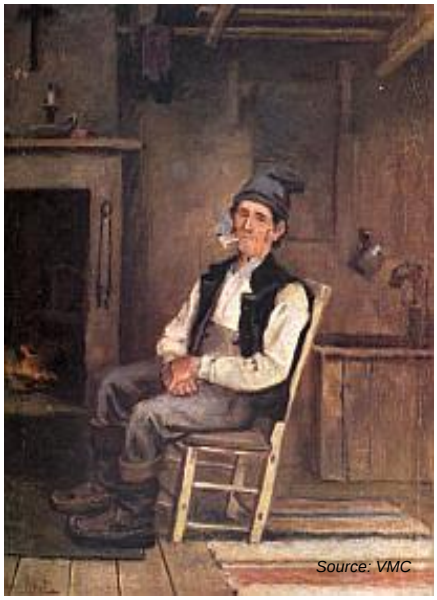
There were interesting customs practiced at the time. For instance, marriages were not allowed during Advent and Lent (total abstinence was asked for by the church during these times). Many of the marriages tended to be in late summer or early fall due to several circumstances. It was a time when the farmer had money from selling some of the grain and would have just been paid, and the ships from France arrived in mid-summer with new prospective brides. Marriages to native Indians were not encouraged and were uncommon except for coureurs-des-bois. Social activities between the French and the Indians were rare other than in times of war.

Many of the young men were enticed by the fur trade despite a ban by the government. Many of coureurs-des-bois bypassed the government and company monopolies and freely traded with the Indians. The church was also concerned over this profession because the men would leave family behind, neglect their farms and corrupt the Indian girls. To maximize personal profit these men would sometimes trade with the English and bypass the French taxation. In addition, they would trade weapons or alcohol with the Indian tribes, causing further problems. The adventurer's life was harsh but it was an attractive life to many young men. In the late 17th century, seeing the attraction of this type of life had for the youth, the Compagnie sought to regulate it by providing limited licenses to what they called "voyageurs" (this was the term used to describe the "legal" side of the profession).. There is no evidence of any of Charles' children having participated in this activity.



It took many years but agriculture eventually became the main economic activity in the new world, surpassing fur as the greatest contributor to the economy. Over time, tradesmen began to appear and more sophisticated and diversified skilled activities such as shipbuilding, tanning, shoe-making, carpentry and stone masonry started taking root. It took significantly less time to become a master tradesman in the new world, and changing professions was also much more common than in France. Statistically, by the 18th century about half of the population was habitants, and the other half consisted of specialized professions such as tradesmen, servants and soldiers. There were few merchants in the colony as many of the habitants had become self-sufficient. Habitants would tinker and learn new skills during the long winter and any knowledge was shared father to son and among the neighbours. Clothing, furniture, food and wood were supplied by the habitant himself and only specialized items such as salt and metal tools, and services such as flour milling and sawmills were sought outside the homestead. People infrequently called upon doctors or veterinarians preferring instead to rely on their faith and prayers to see them through difficult times. The habitants did not believe in the division of labour and many retained the traditional farm to provide almost everything they needed. As a result, industry and economic activity in Quebec grew very slowly. Later, while Europe and the English colonies were in the midst of the Industrial revolution, the French in Quebec were still living in the manner that had been passed down to them. The Industrial Revolution bypassed French Canada. In fact, it wasn't until the end of the 19th century when the economy in Quebec started to catch up and resemble that of the modern world.

Socially, life was very different that in France. More freedoms were assumed by the inhabitants and they developed their own resolutions to problems. They were the masters of their own fate and became very resourceful. They were, for the most part, left alone by the administrators provided they abided by the laws, attended church, paid their annual fees and developed their land. As stated by several historians, a lazy person in the colony would have difficulty surviving. They ate the food they grew, dressed in clothing made in the home and smoked tobacco. They spent their earnings on horses and guns, considered a luxury by the French peasants. They were generally healthier, ate better and had greater access to abundant natural resources such as timber, fish and game. Although there was violence in the territory there were no wars that came close to resembling the destructive ones in Europe. The colonials could enjoy much larger families as there was no shortage of arable land, at least for a time.


Source: VMC

The French in New France also enjoyed much more equality than their European counterparts. Although there were social groups and classes that developed there was little value placed on the size of a land holding and the extremes of wealth. The poverty that was common in Europe was practically absent in New France. The nobility, clergy, military ranks and administrators held a higher social class but the habitants were all considered equals in the community.

The Habitants were known for working hard at what was required but they were also known for not working much beyond this. Few were driven to earn more money or produce more food than what they needed. Habitants were well known for socializing, smoking their pipes and relaxing in their homes and visiting neighbors, especially during the long winters. Their lack of additional productivity that could benefit the crown did annoy some officials but other than encouraging words there was little that could be done about it. Many willingly accepted narrower lots as they required less work for maintaining the land and the roadway. To stem this problem in 1745 a new ordinance stated that no house could be built on less than 1 ½ arpents of land.

Moving between communities was common and we see this in our ancestors. New land opportunities would present themselves and trade ventures would open up. The habitants would eventually settle down but the descendants often moved to where new opportunities lay, would purchase rights to parcels of land or would stay on the family land. The habitants were a hard working, vigorous, independent and resourceful people that did not fear venturing forth. They also held few emotional ties with the land and would not be overly concerned about leaving the family land should a better prospect present itself.

There was no tax if the property one held was given to a family member. Typically it was one of the younger and more responsible sons that would inherit the land. He would often pay for the land or would agree to support his aging parents. The habitant saved his money during his most productive years to help elder sons purchase their own land and by the time the father was ready to retire the younger ones took over the property.

The seigneurial system was abolished in 1854, allowing individuals to outright own their land and free them from the bonds and taxes of the seigneurial system. It took many more years for the habitants to change their habits of self-sufficiency and venture into more industrial and mercantile activities.

Population Surveys of New France

King Louis XIV selected Jean Talon as the first Intendant of New France. Talon assisted the Governor General with financial administration of the colony and one of his first tasks was to take stock of the colony by recording details of the government buildings and churches, and by taking the first population census in the winter of 1665/1666.

The talented and hard-working Talon did most of the work himself. He counted people where they normally resided, recording the names, ages, marital status and other details. Talon's 1666 census is available on microfiche in most main Canadian public libraries.

The records indicate the population of the colony of New France in 1666 was 3,215 (excluding native Indians) and included 528 families. There were 2,034 males and 1,181 females spread primarily among 3 settlement regions: Quebec City (2100 people), Trois Rivieres (455 people) and Montreal (635 people). Specialized occupations included 36 carpenters, 27 joiners, 18 merchants, 9 millers, 8 barrel makers, 5 bakers, 5 surgeons, 4 bailiffs, 3 locksmiths, 3 notaries and 3 schoolmasters.

In Beaupré where Charles settled, there were 533 people, 278 of which were under the age of 21, from 89 families. His record indicates the following:

Charles "Habitant":	35 yrs
Marie Boucher:	22 yrs
François:	7 yrs
Marie:	4 yrs
Geneviève:	3 yrs
Marguerite:	17 mo

At L'Ange Gardien, a township of Beaupré, there were 120 to 130 people in 1664.

The census of 1667 showed a total population in New France of 3,918, including 667 in Beaupré. Note how quickly the population grew, although this is partly attributable to the way the census was conducted. In the census of 1666, many of the *coureurs-de-bois*, or French fur traders, were away plying their trade and not counted.

In Beaupré in 1667 the record indicates the following:

Charles "Habitant":	38 yrs
Marie Boucher:	25 yrs
François:	8 yrs
Marie:	5 yrs
Geneviève:	4 yrs
Marguerite:	2 yrs
Ursule:	2 mo
Beasts: 5; Arpents: 7	

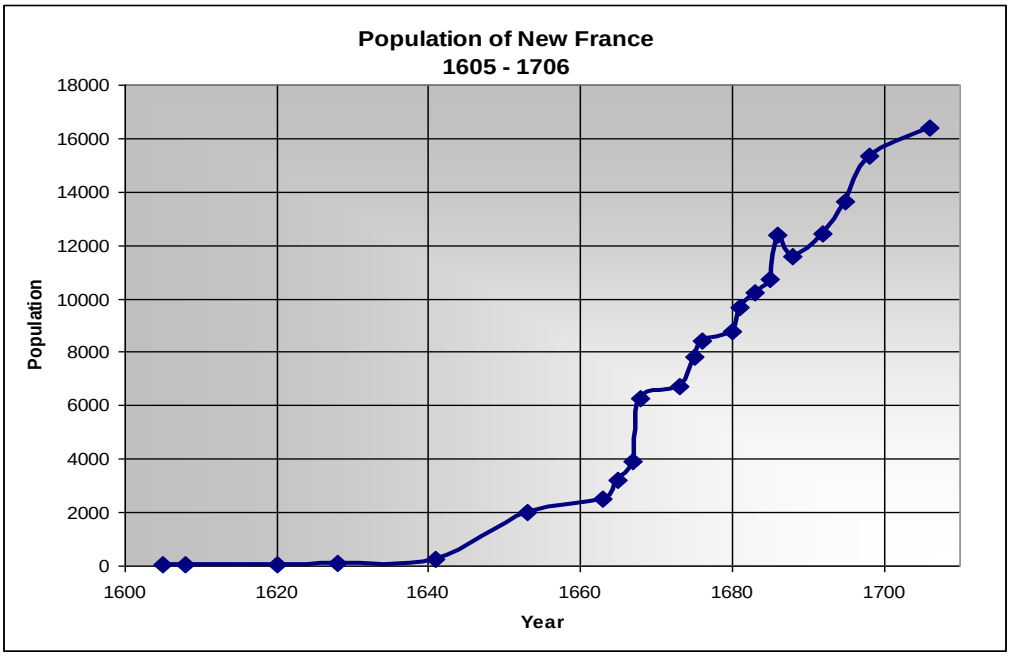


Table: P Godin

The early results of the census convinced the King to recruit and send more women to the colony. The “Filles du Roi”, as they are generally known, arrived in New France between the years 1665 and 1673 to balance the ratio of men to women and to help the colony achieve natural growth. Despite the comparatively harsh conditions of New France to old-world France, the colony grew. In the year 1663 the population grew by 3000 people but 1200 were of children born in the colony, so approximately 40% of the growth was internal. These statistics helped demonstrate to the King that the Compagnie had failed its obligations.

One modern study sampled 3018 men that were married in the colony between 1660 and 1710. These men had 23,668 surviving children carrying their family names. The French Canadians are a fertile group.

The enumeration efforts begun with Jean Talon were continued by new Intendants. The enumerations were not exact as many men would be illegally involved in the fur trade and would not be available to count, but these enumerations were taken seriously and the information that was gathered proved very helpful with identifying the needs of the colony. After the first census in 1666, there were 36 full and 9 partial censuses during the French regime in New France. When New France became a British colony in 1763, census gathering became irregular and population figures were frequently estimated rather than counted.

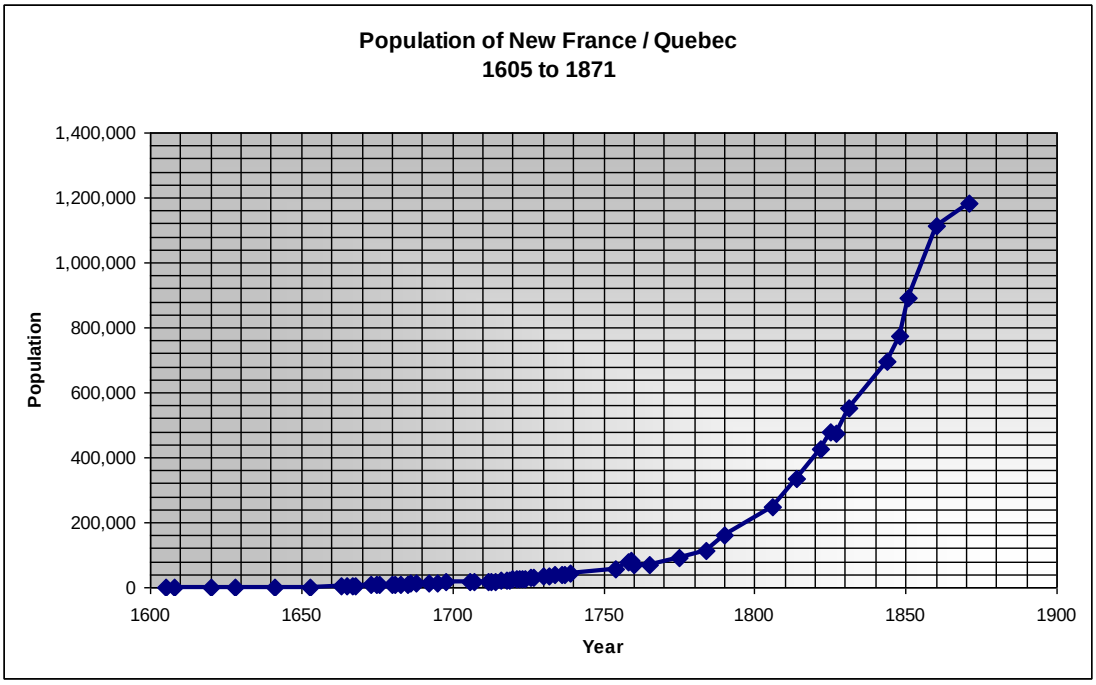


Table: P Godin

The birth rate in the colony was astoundingly high and the death rate was fairly low. This highlighted another one of the differences between France and New France. In the colony there was ample land that simply required labour to produce and larger families could work more land. In France larger families had more difficult time getting by. There was also less disease in the new colony and the people did not participate in war as their European counterparts.

Most of the habitants that arrived in Canada did not have any experience with farming but through support and experience, all habitants were adept enough to produce what they needed and often had extra to spare.

The average lifespan for the 17th century habitant was 62 years for men and 60 for women. According to a study of early Canadians (likely from analyzing the Tanguay Genealogical dictionary), 25% of children died before the age of 1. Marie and Charles only have one recorded death of an infant before the age of 1.

Other Facts

Money in New France and in Acadia was worth more than in France. The value of a Livre was about 25% more in North America due to the difficulties and risks associated with transporting the coins from France. In many cases, if there was a delay in delivery, promissory notes using playing cards were used. This was an unfortunate practice as these notes at times would not be honoured or they would be devalued depending on the political climate at the time.

There was a significant earthquake centered in Beaupré at 5:30 PM local time on February 5th, 1663. Its effects were felt across Eastern North America with an intensity estimated as between an M6 to M7 in magnitude and is known today as the Charlevoix earthquake. Although it caused limited damage to the wooden buildings and no loss of life was reported it did cause massive landslides in the waterways including the St Lawrence, the Saint Maurice and the Batiscan rivers. It was said that a waterfall on the Saint Maurice river disappeared, entire trees floated downstream, islands appears and that the St Lawrence remained murky for a month afterward. Additional tremors were felt for many months afterward, and some of the tremors were so severe that houses in Quebec City were shaken off their foundations, chimneys were toppled, church bells rang, and the countryside was, in some areas, split open. The trees in the forest shook so much that they made sounds like cannon shots when they hit each other. The trees acted drunk, according to accounts by the natives. Animals were disturbed by the event, as were the people.

This earthquake had a much more profound emotional effect on the people in the region. The event was preceded by “aerial marvels and revelations” where apparently a large meteorite had flown over L’Ange-Gardien in the direction of the Island of L’Orleans. The light it produced was reportedly “tremendous”. This meteorite may have caused the massive forest fires in the region. There was also a near total solar eclipse in Quebec that year, on the first day of September. These events, in conjunction with the earthquakes, caused general panic and people spent night and day in the confessional booths.

Although nobody was hurt through these events, many spent considerable time in prayer to help assure their future, with some churches occupied 24 hours per day. Apparently the number of native conversions to the church was incalculable.

Source : Gilles Lauzon et sa Posterité by L Lauzon

By the mid 1600’s there were fewer than 10 people with European origins other than France settled in the colony. In the first 150 years of the colony of New France only 10,000 immigrants arrived from France but most French in Canada today are descendents of, and can trace their lineage back to these original immigrants. In the years 1666 and 1667 there were 600 immigrants. There was a huge influx of immigrants to the United States from France between 1820 and 1860 where over 470,000 arrived in New York City or New Orleans. Entire families travelled together in the more modern steamers. They were escaping the frequent wars, high taxes and land ownership issues in Europe; problems the English were escaping 150 years earlier. Between 1840 and 1920 about 800,000 French Canadians also settled in the United States due to a prolonged weakening of the Quebec economy and poor farming conditions. Since railways at the time charged by the mile, many settled in the northern states of Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Overall, from 1840 to 1940, more than 2 million French left Canada and France for a better life in the United States. Source: French Immigrants by K. Olson.

The King of France, Louis XIV, frequently interfered with the function of the colony. He was very concerned about the slow growth of the colony and was particularly alarmed at the reported attitude of the population toward their superiors. He dictated many regulations to the new intendants, likely with the influence of the church:

- Swearing was considered blasphemy: 1st offence is a fine, 2nd is double the fine and so on until the 5th offence of imprisonment. The 6th offence is hot branding of the lower lip, 7th of the upper lip. The 8th offence should be the last: the tongue was cut out.
- It was illegal for country people to live in towns: penalty of 50 livres and confiscation of all possessions. A fine of 100 livres to those in town that rented a room to someone from the country. The intent of this law was to avoid the problems in France where people sought better fortunes by moving to the cities, leaving a labour shortage for working the fields.
- Permission was required to travel to France (permissions were rarely given to anyone but nobility and clergy or government officials on business).
- Articles made outside of the French Empire would be seized and publicly burned.
- Every house must have a ladder. This was in case of fire.
- No sitting on the porch after 9PM.
- Unmarried girls can only dance in their own homes with their mothers present.

There were also church regulations where work was not permitted on church holidays and saint's days. This caused considerable problems, especially in the relatively short growing season. Those not attending mass would be fined. Those dealing liquor were doing so under threat of excommunication (although home-made wine and beer was very common). Deceased drunks and those that were not Catholic were to be buried outside the Catholic cemeteries.

Jean Talon, the king's statistician and officer of the court, noted that the colony consisted of 3215 of European descent in 1666. The problem was there were 2034 males and only 1181 females in the colony. As a result, he and the king enacted several initiatives and regulations to help the colony grow. The most famous was the "Filles du Roi" (King's Daughters) where between 1665 and 1673 the king sponsored 900 young women and sent them to the colony. He bought them basic supplies and paid their dowries with the expectation that they would take on colonists as husbands and produce children. A second area was the royal decree for the colony to produce offspring. Parents were ordered to get their children married (boys before the age of 20 and girls before sixteen) otherwise the father would be fined every 6 months until the child was wed. All single men arriving in the colony needed to register and were prohibited from fishing, hunting, trading with the Indians or of going into the wilderness until they were married. In 1670 a Francois Lenoir was convicted of trading with an Indian while single and had to promise to be wed within 3 weeks of the arrival of ship from France the following summer otherwise he would pay a considerable fine of 150 Livres. He did get married and there are people today that can trace their family to him, under the dit name of Rolland. Single men also paid a tax for as long as they were single. On the positive side, in 1670 the king paid newly-wed couples 20 livres and paid a family pension of 300 Livres to fathers of 10 children and 400 Livres for those with 12 children. This was a considerable amount of money. According to Gaillardin, in 1666 fathers of large families, and religious people, were exempt from the "collecte, curatelle, guet et garde" (social tax, trusteeship duties, watch and guard duties). The largest families are also exempted from "la taille" (tax). It was abundantly clear that the King, with the recommendations of Jean Talon, wanted the colony to grow. In the fall of 1671 Jean Talon wrote the King stating that the colony has received enough single women, that there were sufficient numbers in the colony to marry the soldiers that wanted to stay. He stated that the births in the colony for the year were expected to be between 600 and 700. This phenomenal growth rate is attributable to the good climate of Canada that has a "fortifying effect" on the women, according to Talon. A few more single, crown-sponsored women would arrive in the colony on 1673 but this would be the end of the arrival of Filles du Roi. Source: BSulte

With the emphasis on population growth and large families, I would not doubt that Charles and Marie Gaudin and their 17 surviving children became legendary in their day.

Entirely used to being generally self-sufficient at their own hands and with assistance only from their neighbors habitants did not take well to regulations being imposed on them. Citizens banded together and protected each other against what they may perceive as an injustice. For instance, if they felt that a fellow Habitant had been mistreated by the courts they would pitch in and help the person with whatever order he or she was told to complete. They once refused to build gallows for a criminal that was to be hanged. There would be many protests in the years to come, although virtually all protests would be peaceful.

French Colonial Soldier in New France, 1660's. Almost all carried a sword.

In the spring of 1660 the Iroquois threatened the Beaupré coast. Many of the inhabitants fled to the safety of Quebec. After 15 days had passed the people had to return to seed their land. In early June eight Iroquois warriors landed at St Anne and took a mother and her 4 children and put them in the canoe. News quickly spread to the city of Quebec and soldiers waited there to ambush the canoe once it passed a certain point. When the canoe was spotted several soldiers fired their shots at the Indians, killing 2 and injuring some of the others. Unfortunately, the mother and an infant were also killed. On June 22nd a marauding band of Indians terrorized the Beaupré coast, killing 8 people in Beaupré and 7 on the Isle d'Orleans. A group of 7 men went to investigate the deaths on the island. Among the victims was a noble's son, a de Lauson. All were ambushed and killed. The Habitants of the region carried a weapon whenever they travelled outside and they could not complete the harvest in 1660. Source: BSulte.

In the early 1660's the churches had wooden pallistades build around them and other small wooden forts began dotting the countryside. These were areas of retreat for the habitants should the Indians invade in force. The Indians needed time to regroup so in 1662 they offered peace knowing the French would readily accept. This was a favourate tactic of the Iroquois where they would ask for peace, which was always accepted, but they would always renew hostilities without warning. For instance, on hearing that French soldiers would arrive at Quebec in 1663, they renewed their hostilities despite having offered peace a few months earlier. The soldiers from France never arrived as they were diverted to Austria and the colony had to fend for itself.

The lower town of Quebec burned in 1682 just as a disagreement with the Iroquois was leading to hostilities. In 1683 French soldiers stayed in the homes of the habitants of the Beaupre coast. In the spring some of these soldiers joined others in Montreal and Quebec and, with Huron and Algonquin soldiers, set toward Iroquois lands to demand peace which they received. Of the 500 that set out for the expedition 100 died of accidents and illness. This type of event was common throughout the 17th and early 18th centuries. The French utilized their soldiers to open and control the trade routes; the habitants fed and housed the soldiers.

The Next Generation

Charles and Marie had a very large family and most of the children married and had children of their own. Many people in Quebec today have a Godin in their ancestry.

What is interesting is seeing the names of the land owners in the area of L'Ange Gardien and realizing that many of them married into the Godin family line. As new land became available later generations of Godins would gradually move up the St-Laurence river to areas between Three Rivers and Quebec until eventually our ancestors sought new challenges in Saskatchewan in the 1880's. An interesting observation is that as I researched our genealogy there were several names that routinely came up in the vicinity of several generations of Godins, whether it is by chance or due to long-term friendships or relationships. These included Vésinat, Gariépy and Trudel. Some of these names would also appear in Saskatchewan at about the same time as Achille, the pioneer that left Quebec.

Marguerite Gaudin, the 3rd child of Charles and Marie, married Guillaume Le Tardif. Guillaume was the son of Olivier Le Tardif, a historically important person in the early colony. Olivier was an employee of the Compagnie and an official when the Kirke brothers took over Quebec. Olivier is best known as the first slave holder in Canada, although this was by circumstance and he truly was not a slaveholder. The Kirke brothers had with them a young slave boy from Madagascar. When the Kirke brothers left Quebec they sold the 7 year old boy to Olivier. When Olivier left the colony shortly thereafter for meetings in France he left the young boy in the care of Guillaume Couillard and he was then passed to the Jesuit Priest Le Jeune for an education. He took on the name of Olivier Le Jeune and was granted his freedom. He remained with the colony until his death as a freeman.

The Seneca Indians, allied with the Iroquois nation and an enemy of the French, controlled the fur trade at the gateway to central North America. The Seneca attacked a large shipment of furs bound for the French market in 1683. The French were concerned that these disruptions in the fur trade were costing significant profits for the colony. In 1687 they decided to act. Canadian militia, French soldiers, Jesuit priests and their Outaouais allies comprising of a total of 1500 people under the leadership of Denonville advanced on the Seneca settlements near present-day Syracuse. In a thriving Seneca village called Gannagaro there were reported as many as 150 longhouses (each could hold 8 to 12 families) and storage buildings for the harvested corn. The village was protected on all sides by a 10 foot wooden palisade. The French were ambushed by the Seneca warriors before they could reach the settlement. After a brief skirmish that left a couple dozen dead Seneca on the battlefield, the Outaouais allies of the French dismembered the bodies and cooked them into a stew. The French were left in shock, horror and disbelief at the war tradition of their allies. The French threat caused the Seneca to burn their own villages and leave the area, and after the forces concluded their campaign they returned to Quebec. .

Pierre Denis was one of the French soldiers that had been sent from France to help secure New France for the King and had participated in this campaign against the Seneca of Gannagaro. In France he was the sergeant in the Company of Monsieur de Valrennes and served as an infantry Captain in New France. When he first arrived in New France he, along with many of the soldiers of the area, likely stayed with the habitants of the region. Perhaps it was then that he got to know Marie Godin who had recently been widowed because barely a month after his return from the campaign he went to the house of Charles Godin and asked if he and Marie could be married. On October 5th 1687 they signed their intent to marry. Present at this meeting were Charles and Marie Godin, the notary Etienne Jacob and witnesses Francois Gariépy and Charles Letarte, and the brother in law of the bride Charles Goulet. Also present was Nicolas Roussin but he was unable to sign the document. The wedding took place on October 8th in the Chapel of L'Ange Gardien. A dowry of 500 livres was promised by the soldier. They took some land on L'Isle D'Orleans where he died on 19 September 1727. His dit name was Lapierre. They had a son and a daughter.

Genevieve Godin, the 3rd child, married Francois Gariépy. He established himself on the land immediately to the west of Charles' land in 1682, and there is a road today in Quebec on this former land that carries his name.

Our family in the first generation formed ties with the Boucher family. The second generation formed ties with the following families: Gariépy, Lapierre, Quentin, Tardif, Perron, Dusmesnil / Lamusique, Desnoux, Chauvet / Laguerne, Mathieu, Amelot / Sanspeur, Lefrancois, Auger, Glinel, Jacob, Vezina, Guillot and Pagé.

There would be over 63 grandchildren for Charles and Marie, of which 30 males carried the family name.

Our lineage follows that of Charles (II), the 5th child of Charles senior that married into the Perron family. He was the first to be married.

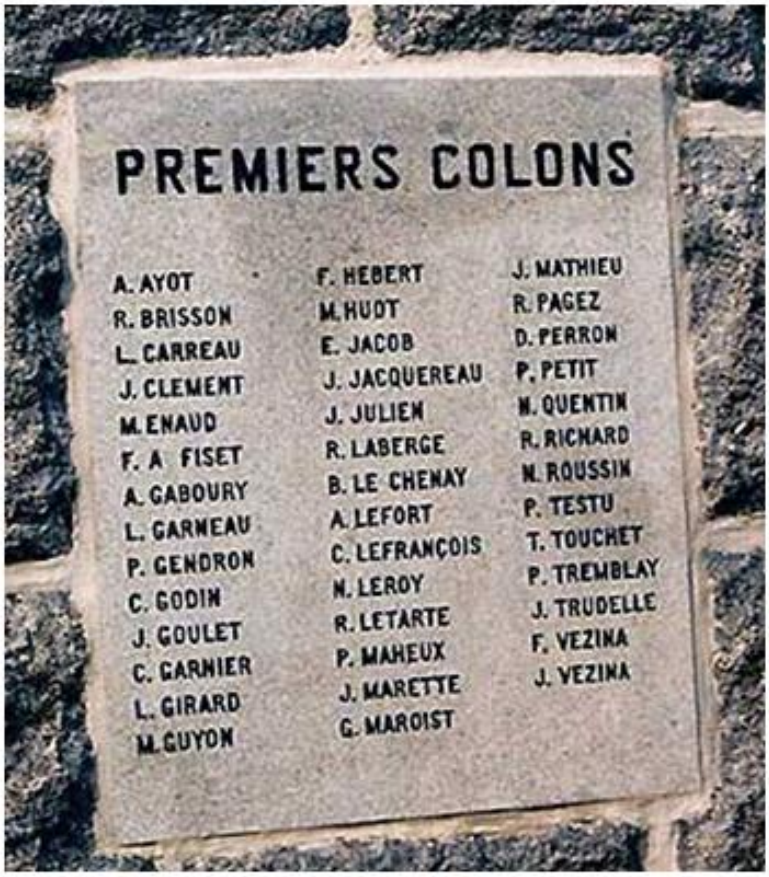
Additional Information

Notary Records in the Collectionscanada.gc.ca archives:

May 28, 1661: Sale by Charles Godin and Marie Boucher to Guillaume Marescot (no 82) Claude Auber, notary.

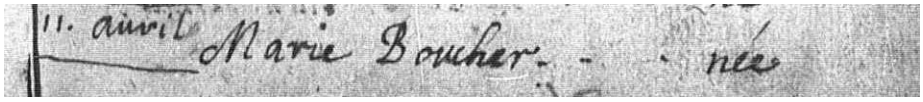
Although there are few details, it seems that it was a transfer of ownership of a half-arpent of land from Charles' original 3 arpents. Guillaume is reported to have returned to France the following year.

Image of the monument erected in 1909 dedicated to the descendents of Jean Trudel(le) but a side inscription thoughtfully included the names of his neighbors including Charles Godin. Jean and Charles were long-standing Church Wardens and likely spent much time together. The monument was built on the foundation of Jean's original house and its stones were incorporated into the monument's structure. 46°54'2.58"N 71° 7'13.83"W



Monument in L'Ange-Gardien, Quebec
Title states "First Colonists"

1642 (April 11) Baptism of Marie Boucher (This was a single line entry as she was born before records were kept and was added later, Québec)



1656 (Nov 6) Marriage Charles Godin (I) & Marie Boucher (Québec)